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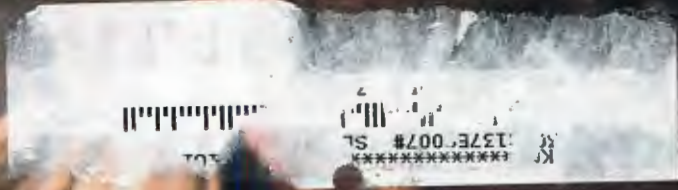
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As we continue this war, our heroes will have available a new class of supergloves. We are proud to be equipping the hands of freedom, protecting the hands of justice, and enabling the fingers on the

triggers of the weapons that will send those bastards to hell! Beneath the rubble in New York lay our brothers, our sisters, our friends - the first victims on the tripwire of liberty. For those who did this, mistake not our patience for the silent rage that lies within. Our mission is just, our resolve absolute, our courage unlimited and our vengeance will be complete.



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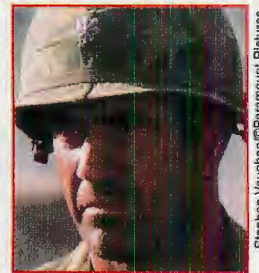


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APRIL 2002 ✕ VOL. 27 NO. 4



Stephen Vaughan/Paramount Pictures

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Mel Gibson
deserves accolades for his accurate and positively stunning production, *We Were Soldiers Once ... And Young*.
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Michael Nischalke

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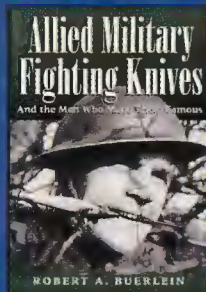
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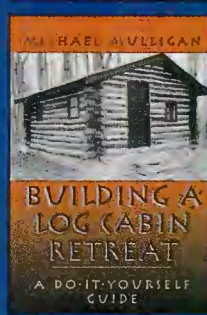


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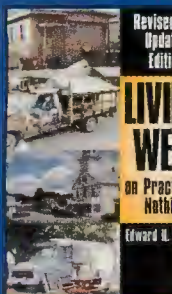


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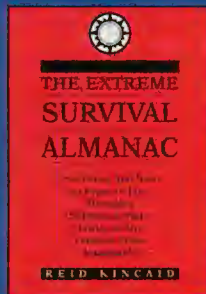
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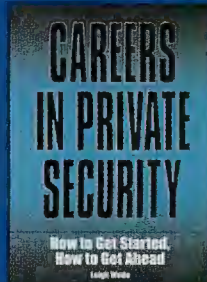
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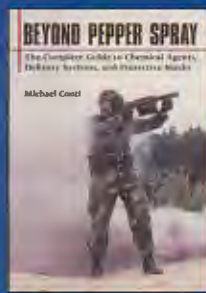
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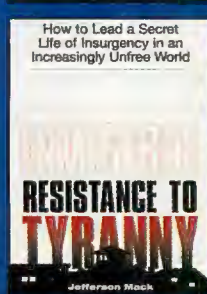
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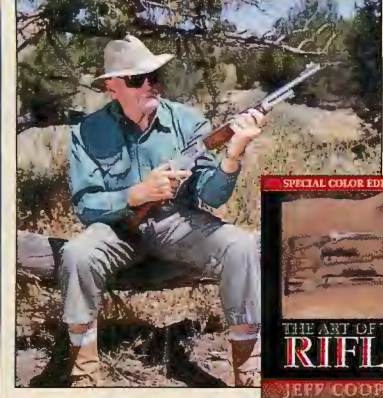
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How to Lead a Secret Life of Insurgency in an Increasingly Unfree World
by Jefferson Mack
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Command Guidance

BY ROBERT K. BROWN

Just A Reminder

I pulled this off the web and do not know who the author is. However, it struck a chord with me and in this time of "political correctness" I think it addresses a subject that few in the media are willing to deal with. I'd like to hear from SOFers regarding their take on the subject, pro or con.

— Robert K. Brown, Editor/Publisher

There are a few things that those who have recently come to our country, and apparently some native Americans, need to understand. First of all, it is not our responsibility to continually try not to offend you in any way. This idea of America being a multicultural community has served only to dilute our sovereignty and our national identity. As Americans, we have our own culture, our own society, our own language, and our own lifestyle. This culture, called the "American Way," has been developed over centuries of struggles, trials and victories by millions of men and women who have sought freedom. Our forefathers fought, bled and died for it.

We speak English. Therefore, if you wish to become part of our society — learn our language!

"In God We Trust" is our national motto. This is not some off-the-wall, Christian, right-wing, political slogan — it is our national motto. It is engraved in stone in the House of Representatives and Capitol and it is printed on our currency. We adopted this motto because Christian men and women, on Christian principles, founded this nation; and this is clearly documented throughout our history. If it is appropriate for our motto to be inscribed in the halls of our highest level of government, then it is certainly appropriate to display it on the walls of our schools.

God is in our pledge, our national anthem, and in our founding documents. We honor His birth, death, and resurrection as holidays, and we turn to him in prayer in times of crisis. If God offends you, then I suggest you consider moving to another part of the world, because God is part of our culture and we are proud to have Him.

We are proud of our heritage and those who have so honorably defended our freedoms. We celebrate Independence Day, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Flag Day. We have parades, picnics, and barbecues where we proudly wave our flag. As an American, I have the right to wave my flag, sing my national anthem, quote my national motto, and cite my pledge whenever and wherever I choose.

The American culture is our way of life, our heritage, and we are proud of it. We are happy with our culture and have no desire to change, and we really don't care how you did things where you came from. Like it or not, this is our country, our land, and our lifestyle.

Our First Amendment gives every citizen the right to express his opinion about our government, culture, or society, and we will allow you every opportunity to do so. But once you are done complaining, whining, and griping about our flag, our pledge, our national motto or our way of life, I highly encourage you to take advantage of one other great American freedom — the right to leave.

Another point: Try going to another country and speak against what you don't like. You will more than likely end up jailed, or even killed.

The more patriotism that is removed from where our children are taught, the less our children will learn about what it is to be an American and our nation's spirit will slowly be killed. Keep patriotism alive. God bless America, our military and our veterans! ✘

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE (USPS 525-810, ISSN 0145-6784), April 2002, Volume 27, Number 4, is published monthly by SOLDIER OF FORTUNE Inc., 5735 Arapahoe Ave., Suite A-5, Boulder, CO 80303-1340. Periodicals Postage is paid at Boulder, CO and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, Subscription Department, POB 348, Mt Morris, IL 61054-0348 or call 1-800-877-5207. U.S. and APO-FPO subscription rate for twelve monthly issues \$29.95. Canada add \$10.00/yr. additional postage (includes GST tax registration business number: 12847 6249 RT). All other countries add \$21.00 U.S. FUNDS ONLY. Single Issue Price — U.S.: \$4.99; United Kingdom: £2.60; Canada: \$5.99. PRINTED IN THE USA.

CONTRIBUTORS: Manuscripts, photographs or drawings are submitted at the contributor's own risk. Material should be mailed to Articles Editor, SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, 5735 Arapahoe Ave., Suite A-5, Boulder, CO 80303-1340, and cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient postage. Any material accepted is subject to such revision as is necessary to meet the editorial requirements of SOF. All manuscripts must be typed double-spaced. All photographs must be credited and be accurately identified. Payment will be made at rates current at time of publication. Editorial office phone number is 303-449-3750.

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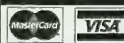
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Bulletin Board



Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James L. Jones holds up the new USMC cammies (Marine Corps Combat Utility Uniform – MCCUU), which went on sale in January. The new “pixel” pattern looks like video-screen pixels close up, and looks like as close as you can get to nothing from a distance. It is now being sold and issued in a woodland and a desert color scheme, and a further gray-based urban cammie pattern is in the works. Garrison covers and boonie hats are also available, and new rough-out combat boots will be in the pipeline soon. Made from wash-and-wear cotton/nylon fabric, the new uniforms have more and better pockets, can accept insertable elbow and knee pads, and come reinforced at the knees and seat. The Corps has applied for three patents on the new cammie pattern.

No 'Yard Repatriation W/O Protection!

As a preface to tripartite talks in Phnom Penh on the status of Vietnamese ethnic minority asylum seekers, Human Rights Watch has called on all parties to ensure that rights of individuals fleeing persecution are fully protected. UNHCR is meeting to discuss parameters of repatriation of some 1,000 Montagnards who have fled to Cambodia from Vietnam to escape religious and political persecution, and Human Rights Watch's investigations show a relentless government campaign on the part of Vietnam against Montagnards, particularly those who embrace Evangelical Christianity. As recently as December, dozens of Montagnard Christians were rounded up and arrested for trying to organize Christmas ceremonies and prayer services. On 28 December, Cambodian authorities deported 167 Montagnards who fled across the border with Vietnam, and while some of the women have returned home, many of the men are still missing.

Although trying to get the Vietnamese government to do the right thing is like trying to stand a mud puddle on end,

you can help. Contact HRW for more information: Joe Saunders in New York @ 212-216-1207; Rachael Reilly in New York @ 212-216-1207; or Mike Jendrzeczyk in Washington @ 202-612-4341.

The Un-Booing Boo-Boo

On Christmas day, cable network VH1 rebroadcast the “Concert in New York City” in which musicians and actors performed to raise money for the families of the police and firefighters killed in the Twin Towers fire and collapse. But what they rebroadcast was a sanitized, revisionist-history-at-its best version: At the point where now-Senator Hillary Clinton was booed off the stage, they over-dubbed regular, enthusiastic crowd noise. Gone were the shouts of “go away, we don't want you here,” aimed at the tin-horn politician who garnered votes calling cops “murders” and whose spouse pardoned convicted cop-killing Puerto Rican terrorists in a disgusting ploy for the New York Puerto Rican vote.

Oddly enough (surprise, surprise, surprise) VH1 is owned by the mega-propaganda giant Viacom, who also owns Simon & Schuster, who gave Hillary an \$8 million advance on the book she hasn't written yet. Viacom also owns CBS, TNN, UPN Network, Blockbuster, Paramount Studios and a host of other media and outdoor advertising companies.

Afghan Debrief

While the SpecOps troops deployed early on to Afghanistan performed with aplomb and true professionalism, feedback is coming in on what they'd like to see on the ground next time around. USSCOM is one of the better units when it comes to planning ahead so they do not have to fight the next war with the last war's tactics and technology, as has often been the case. What are the troops asking for? One Green Beret troop had a wish list that started not with hardware, but with more training, and redirected emphasis on current training. More training on individual weapons, for instance: “they are in a situation where they might have to hold off a hundred guys for a day or two with their personal weapons. Can't do that if you spend your time cutting grass and teaching ROTC cadets how to use a compass.” Language proficiency, also was high on his list. Bearing in mind that training indigenous troops is what Army Special Forces do best, he noted “must get better at this. Send the guys with high aptitude to [Defense Language Institute] or create a like capability at Fort Bragg, with year-long courses designed to maintain Special Forces skills; I submit that means four or five guys on each team who are near fluent in a variety of lan-



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gages of value in their [specialty], not 12 guys who can order coffee in one language.”

In the area of hardware, comms and transport headed the list. “We are using every bit of comms gear we have. Whoever thought that two, or four [radios] per Special Forces team was good enough, well, in my opinion... forget it... Need one [radio] per man. Need as many good, multi-wave and long-range radios per team as we can get. Need simpler and lighter. Need less power usage.”

SpecOps also need a special inventory of vehicles, varied and variable to be mission-specific. “Our guys need to be able to move – need pre-stocked ‘tool kit’ of ground transportation in every theater, and at home station for training, for the Kosovos, the Afghanistans, the whatever. Mix of HumVee plat-

forms, Toyota 4x4s, whatever, with configurable armor, weapons, sensors, must be available fast. Cannot tell you how much mobility has become critical factor. Also need air transport independent of multimillion-dollar helos and fixed wing.”

You know what we like about this wish list? Every item mentioned is totally mission-oriented. Nobody bitched about rations or comfort items or not getting their mail in the field: they just want what it takes to do the best possible job. These troops are as good as it gets. Be sure your elected officials know you think they should have the gear that is as good as they are.

al-Qaeda Allies Terrorize Indonesian Christians

Thousands of Christian villagers have fled in the mountainous interior of Sulawesi Island in the Indonesian archipelago to escape an offensive by Muslim “holy warriors.” Last December the Indonesian government linked the Laskar Jihad militia to Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaeda terrorist network. Arriving last October, the well-armed terrorists quickly displaced the Christian villagers, who are armed only with small arms, home made weapons and knives. Five Christians were killed and five villages were seized in late December, according to Indonesian police.

Thousands of villagers originally from the Poso district have escaped to the hills, where they are eking out a living, to avoid the wave of attacks. Some estimates of the number of displaced on the Island of Sulawesi run as high as a half a million. There have been thousands of casualties over the past three years due to religious, ethnic and separatist violence, but this onslaught is of particular interest to authorities because this previously unknown group is headed by Afghan alumnus and bin Laden associate Jafar Umar Thalib.



Military Parachuting Tours International, ram-rodged by SOF Chief Foreign Correspondent Rob Krott, is filling out the manifest for Operation NORTH SEA 2002, the 7th annual jump into Holland on 26 May-02 June 2002 on Texel Island. Here two U.S. jumpers check reserves before their fifth Netherlands jump. Contact Krott at P.O. Box 1573, Olean, NY 14760 or para6@hotmail.com .

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The militia claims to be in Poso to defend Muslims, do social work, and conduct religious instruction – but the Indonesian government says they are there to seize land from Christians in the northern part of Sulawesi, where they make up slightly more than half the population.

“Religion was just used to create conflict with each other. It’s multidimensional,” stated police spokesman Agus Sugianto. Before the violence in Poso, Muslims and Christians lived beside each other.” Indonesia is the world’s most populous Muslim country, with some 90% of its 210 million following that faith.

log on to www.zwnews.com — the world’s leading website on Zimbabwe, and one of the best sources of real-time info there is.

Quotable Notable

“Look Bernie, of course there’s a liberal bias in the news. All the networks tilt left...If you repeat this, I’ll deny it.” CBS News President Andrew Heyward in 1993, as quoted in the former CBS reporter Bernard Goldberg’s new Book, *BIAS, A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News*.

Zimbabwean Terror Escalates

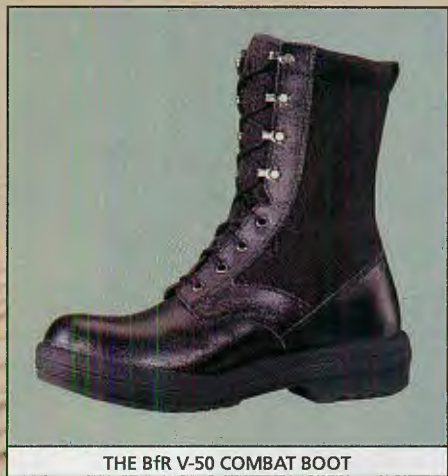
The transparent campaign of terror against the MDC (Movement for Democratic Change) by agents of President Robert Mugabe and his ZANU-PF party continue at an accelerated rate in the run-up to presidential elections scheduled for March. Four MDC supporters were murdered the first of the year, and schools in rural areas are being turned into military training camps, where youths are given a quickie 10-day course in being a marauder, then bussed back to terrorize townships. Food, clothing and material goods are stolen, owners beaten, and homes burned. Under the guise of a national youth service, this cadre of “terror teens” is Hitler’s Brownshirts all over again. New recruits are forcing people to join them in “toyi-toyi” sessions where ZANU-PF slogans are chanted. Meanwhile, Central Intelligence Organisation agents are stalking food-aid distributors in rural areas, in violation of a memorandum of understanding signed by the government and the World Food Programme. This, in the former breadbasket of Africa.

For instant updates on the sorry happenings in Zimbabwe,

Smart Buy

With stocks being drawn down with heavy usage in Afghanistan, the Pentagon is placing orders for more JDAM “smart bomb” kits to keep inventories high. Best estimates are that more than half the 10,000 kits ordered so far have been used. The Navy has ordered 1,074 more. Last April the Pentagon signed a \$260 million contract with Boeing to supply 12,204 kits over a year’s time. Although the Pentagon was unwilling to discuss numbers, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz noted that “we’re using them with great effect, but also in very large numbers and we’re looking at how we can build those inventories back as rapidly as possible.”

Fitting the 1,000- and 2,000-pound bombs, the satellite-guidance kits cost about \$25,000 each, a cost-effective alternative to \$1 million Tomahawk cruise missiles. Bombs thus equipped can be dropped from 45,000 feet and up to 15 miles away from their target, and they can be launched from a variety of bombers or tactical jets. ✕



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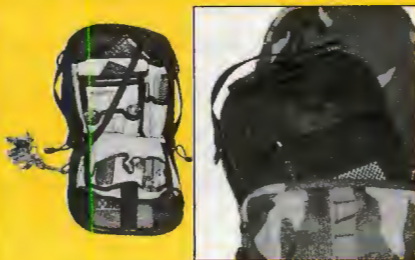
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Update On Torture

BY DR. MARTIN BRASS

SOF readers will recall the three part series in the December, January and February SOF issues which highlighted General Paul Aussaresses confessions of his use of torture in the course of implementing the French Government's no holds barred order to break the back of the FLN terrorist movement during the Algerian conflict in the late 50s. Aussaresses and his publishers went on trial Monday November 26, 2001. What was the outcome of the long anticipated trial?

The following questions frequently asked by SOF readers will also be addressed: What has happened to Algeria since the French withdrew in 1962, and the country gained independence? What is the current state of International law and French and U.S. law with regard to torture? What is the status of the contemporary use of torture?

multiple complaints were lodged against Aussaresses in both France and Algeria. French and Algerian courts accepted complaints filed by the relatives of some who allegedly died after being tortured by Aussaresses as well as complaints filed by human rights organizations. A parliamentary commission of inquest was established. Aussaresses was indicted by the press and by the public who were forced to once again face the unresolved issues and scars left by the Algerian conflict.

State Prosecutor Jean-Pierre Dintilhac believes that "The acts for which General Aussaresses has acknowledged responsibility and which happened during the Algerian conflict are clearly war crimes." The Prosecutor faced a major stumbling block, however, even had he wanted to press war crimes charges against Aussaresses. Just as the United States had granted amnesty to draft dodgers after the Viet Nam war,

The extent of torture practiced over the last nine years in Algeria makes Massu and Aussaresses look like amateurs. Algerian generals have been perforating the skulls of prisoners with electric drills, burning their bodies with blow torches and feeding them sewage. — Front Islamique du Salut

"I would do it again today if it were against bin Laden," French General Aussaresses fearlessly told the French Court in November, 2001.

The frustrated alleged victims and their families, the various international human rights non governmental organizations, among others who demanded justice for Aussaresses actions in the Algerian conflict listened as the defiant Aussaresses addressed the court. The still livid administration, including French President Jacques Chirac, and Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, less concerned about Aussaresses paying for his actions, wanted revenge on the man who had exposed the French government.

"I cannot be accused of murder" Aussaresses had always maintained. "A soldier cannot be condemned for following the procedures that a situation calls for. Had he refused to use "all means" to eliminate the FLN, he said, he would have had to leave the French army.

"I had behind me 15 years of military service, during which I never refused an order," he had told France Info radio in November.

Furthermore, for 3,000 prisoners to disappear out of a total of 24,000 detained was "not a lot" he told the court.

83-year-old General Paul Aussaresses was being tried in Paris for detailing in his book *Services Speciaux, Algerie*, the use of State Sponsored torture in the Algerian conflict in the late 1950s. After the publication of his book in May 2001,

the French parliament passed a general amnesty in 1968. That law codified two decrees issued in March, 1962, which granted amnesty for the crimes committed during the Algerian war, including amnesty for any actions undertaken which were directed against the Algerian insurrection during the efforts to maintain order.

In any event, French law placed a ten-year statute of limitations for war crimes.

Crimes against humanity, on the other hand, had no statute of limitations. In 1994, the French penal code codified crimes against humanity which included massive and systematic summary executions, disappearances, torture or inhumane acts inspired by political, philosophical, racial or religious. The punishment was life. His accusers fought diligently to have him charged with crimes against humanity.

Although crimes against humanity had previously been invoked by the French High Court in the Barbie and Touvier cases, that precedent dealt with the Nuremberg statute that was limited to crimes committed during WWII. The court refused to invoke crimes against humanity against Boudarel, a commissioner in the Vietminh camp in 1952 to 1954 during the Indochina war accused of crimes against humanity.

The 1994 French legal reform limited the charge of crimes against humanity to offences committed during WWII or after 1994.

Therefore, General Aussaresses could not be tried for his

actions in the Algerian conflict.

Wishing not to be seen as soft on torture and mass executions, and needing to pacify the incensed public, the Prosecutor dragged up an obscure French law that made "complicity in justifying war crimes" a criminal action. The penal code carried a maximum jail sentence of five years and a maximum fine of \$40,330.

In other words, it was to be a "show" trial.

In January, Aussaresses was convicted for "complicity in justifying war crimes" and fined \$6,500. He was free to walk.

Algeria — The Forgotten Killing Field

A November, 2000 report in the Economist disclosed that approximately 200 people were being killed every month in Algeria. Over 100,000 people have been killed since the outbreak of the current conflict in 1992. Disappearances of more than 4,000 have been reported since 1992 following their arrest by government forces.

Nearly 100 inmates died during the suppression of an uprising at Serkadji prison in February 1995. The dead were buried without autopsies.

According to Human Rights Watch, in 1996 an intense spell of violence took a terrifying turn, massacring civilians by cutting their throats or burning them alive in their homes. Human Rights Watch reports that extra judicial executions, deliberate and arbitrary killings, torture, rape "disappearances" and hostage taking have become routine. Widespread human rights abuses by security forces, state armed militias and armed Islamic groups continue.

400 people had their throats cut one September night in 1997. The army was on the scene and soldiers blocked access

to the areas where the killings took place, preventing neighbors from coming to the aid of the victims.

More recently, from April 18 to May 4, 2001, 42 were killed and hundreds wounded.

The ongoing atrocities committed against the civilians by the military, police and Islamic terrorists and the inaction by the international community have prompted Algeria to be referred to as the "forgotten killing fields".

Algerian President Bouteflika, along with Algerian General Nezzar and other Generals who served in the French army in the 1950s, had no desire to demand an apology from France for the actions of the French government in Algeria. They did not "want to interfere in French affairs." One might suggest such a reaction was prompted by their reluctance to draw attention to their own nefarious activities. Just as in France, amnesties were granted to all Algerians involved in the Algerian conflict in the 1960s.

The Current State Of Torture: Same Methods, Just Different Techniques

"If anybody has any doubt that our CIA, over time, has taught people to torture, has encouraged torture, has probably itself tortured in extreme cases, I have a bridge to sell you in Brooklyn." Prominent staunch civil rights supporter and defender of O.J. Simpson, Alan Dershowitz, was quoted as saying.

In fact numerous reports have been made that United States investigators are considering resorting to harsher interrogation techniques including torture on members of Osama

Continued on page 80

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American Sniper In Israel

Jerusalem Diary

BY DAVID STONE

1-2 December, 2340 hours: "Aba (Dad)! There has just been an attack downtown!"

Put on the TV!" There is an immediate and intense sick feeling in the pit of my stomach. Two suicide bombers just coordinated blowing themselves-up in the midst of the Saturday night crowd of teens in Zion Square, the center of downtown Jerusalem. Israeli TV is already broadcasting live. As we watch the wounded being evacuated there is a BOOM. The camera instinctively swings toward the sound and we see flames, smoke and flying pieces of car. A car (bomb) deliberately parked adjacent to where the terrorists correctly figured the evacuation coordination center would be has just exploded. It will be morning before the casualty numbers are known.

0600 hours: Radio reports 10 dead, all teens, 180 wounded. TV still is broadcasting live from the sight of the attack. There is no glass in any of the windows up to the fourth floor of the buildings in view.

0740 hours: Radio reports terrorists just ambushed a civilian vehicle in the Gaza Strip. The initial fire left the driver wounded and unable to move. While on his mobile phone telling his wife he was just wounded in an attack, he is killed when the terrorists closed-in on the car and riddled it with bullets from point-blank range.

0920 hours: I'm beginning my drive downtown. I turn up the street. Oh no! Immediately I realize two of our neighbors' children were killed in last night's bombings. The sight of high school age kids crying, on the steps of the two murdered teens' homes, literally across the street from one another, says it all.

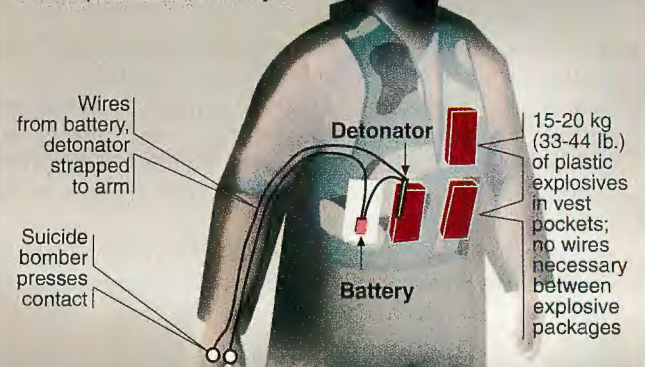
1050 hours: Shrapnel, nails and nuts, can still be found all over, missed by the street cleaners last night. I'm dressed like



A common sight on the streets of Jerusalem: A bomb-sniffing canine does his duty.

Suicide bomber

How a suicide bomber typically hides explosives on the body:



Hard to detect

- Devices are becoming smaller and easier to conceal
- Terrorists use a variety of devices to retain an element of surprise and to evade attention of security authorities

Profile of typical Palestinian suicide bomber

- Unmarried men in late teens and 20s
- Affiliated with Palestinian militant groups
- Media-conscious; timing of attacks carefully considered to achieve most public impact
- Believe they will go straight to paradise
- Fanatical about their Islamic beliefs

Source: Jan's, Danish Army, BBC news Graphic: Eeli Pöll

© 2001 KRT

the driver of an 18-wheeler from Arkansas walking into a diner to get his thermos refilled — exactly how I expect a suicide bomber in downtown Jerusalem would be disguised this morning. There is a "Hot Alert." Two MaGav stop me. Seems I fit the general description of the individual for whom they are looking. I'm glad they stop me and check my identity card.

1215 hours: Radio reports a suicide bomber just blew-up a passenger bus in Haifa; 16 dead and 40 wounded.

1450 hours: Radio reports a sniper, undoubtedly a graduate of the CIA and Spetsnaz advanced marksmanship and snipercraft courses, fired from within Area "A" hitting in the head a soldier manning an IDF position.

1540 hours: Radio reports terrorists in the northern Jordan Valley just detonated a roadside bomb severely damaging a passing inter-city passenger bus; 7 wounded.

1600 hours: Radio reports a "Palestinian" has tried, now at a second school in the neighborhood of my daughter's

school, to drive his 4x4 onto the school grounds. He is "dissuaded" by alert Ministry of Education security officers. An intense search is on for this suspected bomber.

1700 hours: My wife calls. The daughter of her co-worker didn't go to the birthday party downtown last night attended by all the other 16-year-old girls from her neighborhood. All were wounded, some critically.

1900 hours: Radio reports an attack on a MaGav patrol. A senior NCO is critically wounded by small-arms fire.

2340 hours: It is now 24 hours from the start of this latest wave of terror. There have been about 30 attacks. The count is 27 dead and more than 230 wounded, 30 critically so.

3 December

We strike targets "belonging" to Chairman Arafat. His personal fleet of helicopters is destroyed leaving him virtually stranded in Ramallah. Even better than watching the evening's live broadcast of the NFL on Fox Sunday game with John Madden on METV (Middle Eastern), is watching Apache helicopters fire their Vulcan's at Arafat's helicopter hanger. Awesome firepower! For a nightcap the late night news reports that two members of Force 17, Arafat's personal guard, were blown-up when the bomb they were preparing in an apartment in Bethlehem (no doubt intended for use in downtown Jerusalem) detonated.

6 December

This morning a suicide bomber prematurely detonated in downtown Jerusalem. Reportedly he jumped over a puddle to keep from getting his feet wet and landed with a Boom! The concussion and flying body parts lightly injured 8 passersby. The terrorist's head was propelled with enough force to have knocked out one of the Hilton Hotel's windows landing in an occupied guestroom. The resultant "head" jokes have not stopped and the hotel's unofficial name forever more will be the "Hilton Head."

9 December

There was an unsuccessful suicide bomber attack during this morning's rush hour in Haifa; none killed, 40 wounded. The presence of large numbers of security personnel "spooked" the bomber. Only part of the explosives wrapped around his body detonated as he ran toward a group waiting for a bus. The first police on the scene to realize

he wasn't dead immediately killed him (as he was trying to detonate a second vest of explosives he was wearing). Take no chances! Hazmat vans were dispatched to the bombing. It is disclosed that in several of the last terrorist bombs have included chemical warfare agents. We already knew that many suicide bombers were human biological warfare delivery devices for hepatitis.

1420-1850 hours: I'm on a roof overlooking Zion Square, sight of last Saturday night's triple bombing. Four of us, with fresh Sabak security clearances, are responsible for providing inner circle precision marksmanship. We are protecting New Yorkers Giuliani, Bloomberg and Pataki, Israel's President, Prime Minister and Chief Rabbi among others. His Honor will be lighting the first candle of Hanukkah as a special gesture of solidarity. While waiting for the VIPs to arrive I collect a dozen nuts littering my position — blackened bomb shrapnel. U.S. special envoy General Anthony Zinni, who's mission to bring about a ceasefire has been totally rejected by Palestinian actions, makes an 11th hour plea for "two days of quiet."

12 December

It is widely believed that the Hizbullah terrorists drove Israel from southern Lebanon and that they should be emulated. Some of their tactics were used this evening. Two roadside bombs were exploded stopping a passing bus. The passenger bus, other passing vehicles and arriving rescuers came under fire from automatic weapons and hand grenades from several terrorists who had carefully located their ambush position on a nearby hillside. Almost simultaneously, in the Gaza Strip, the explosion of a roadside bomb was used to stop traffic allowing two suicide bombers to detonate the explosives they wore as they threw themselves on passing Israeli cars. The attacks killed 10 and wounded 34.

15 December

General Zinni leaves. During his three weeks in Israel the terrorists murdered 45 and wounded over 350, of which 55 remain in critical condition.

24 December

Three of Chairman Arafat's Fatah Tanzim picked the wrong car to ambush. From the side of the road they sprayed it with AK-47 and M16 fire. Its driver managed a controlled stop despite suffering from multiple bullet wounds to the chest

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and abdomen. The terrorists moved in for the kill and opened fire from close range. Surprise, the driver a member of Israeli IPSC opened fire with his licensed pistol, killing one terrorist and wounding seriously another with his first shots. Being armed saved his life. The lone terrorist to escape is wanted for the murder of two Israelis a year ago. At that time he was arrested by PLO police and then released by the Palestinian's "Revolving Door" justice system. Meanwhile, in Haifa a suicide bomber was captured thwarting a planned Christmas Eve attack.

27 December

The outgoing IDF Chief of Intelligence warned that an American attack on Iraq is likely to result in an Iraqi counter-attack aimed at Israel. He declined to comment on how much warning Israel would get and in turn how much warning the IDF would provide to the civilian population. Later I listened to Deputy Minister of Defense Dalia Rabin-Pelossof on Israeli radio. She responded to a mother's concern about her child going to school with an attack possible. The Deputy Minister calmed concern explaining we would have a couple days heads-up on a possible American attack and that the Israeli public would know of the attack before the American public. Earlier this month the IDF's Chief of Staff ordered the Home Front Command to have completed by January all preparations for an Iraqi strike against Israel using biological and chemical warfare agents. The inevitability of the U.S.A. hitting Iraq isn't a question of "if," only "when," in the opinion of many Israeli leaders, including former Prime Minister Netanyahu.

31 December

The month and the year have end with the murder of a neighbor. Several Arabs from the village across the street from the community five minutes north of Jerusalem where he lived lured him to his death. I am sitting and writing my journal within sight, just several hilltops away, from where they killed him, threw his body down a hole and sold his car in PA controlled Ramallah. The police may yet call the murder criminal, not terrorism. But the murders picked this man because he was Israeli. They would never kill a fellow Arab in order to steal and sell his car. Happy New Year.

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Flak



Millionaires Club

I read your article "Who Wants to Be A Millionaire, Part II of the Nigerian 419 Scams" by Frank Hopkins. I am pleased to see some press on this. Although I have not lost any money with the exception of the cost of paper for incoming faxes, as president of J. L. Wilson & Associates I have received nearly 180 Nigerian 419 scam e-mails since January 1, 2001. I have posted most of these on my website in an effort to 1) help increase awareness of the scam, and 2) discourage my getting more of them.

Jim Wilson
www.jlwilsoninc.com

Gutless Wonders



I am a Marine currently with the 31st MEU (SOC), Okinawa, Japan. I read an article today that you published, "Young and the Gutless." This made me sick. I would like for

America to know that there are young men still willing to defend that which we hold true. We stand the watch so that the "gutless" don't have to. I do what I do because of a love of God and Country. And I do it of my own free will. I would love to meet these young people who bad-mouth us and our nation.

Cpl. Mark D. LeMense, USMC

Freaked Out

You guys used to freak me out. It was like you wanted to kill everyone that wasn't a good ol' boy from Nebraska or Texas. You and your allies may just be

the saviors of decent humanity after all. You still scare me a bit, but I'm glad you are on the good guy's side. All power to the Western Alliance!

Glen
Via e-mail from Australia

Anything that sounds like "dangerous" can be taken as editorial hyperbole, but we are not bashful about reporting the truth as we see it or roundly denouncing tyranny in any form or location. Sometimes, the facts ARE scary.

Let Them Eat Cake As Long As They Fear Me

Horatio Hornblower quoted "Oderint duum metuant" (in C.S. Forster's *Flying Colors*) but it's not an "old British Navy saying," as Command Guidance would have it (*SOF*, February 2002). "Let them hate [me] so long as they fear [me]" was a maxim of the Roman Emperor Caligula, a guy even Al-Qaeda would consider a nut case.

Dick Eney
Bladensburg, MD

It's not uncommon for the seminal writer of an adroitly turned phrase to lose credit when a subsequent quoter is better known. Ike, for instance, was fond of the observation that "there has never been a bad peace nor a good war" and is often credited with the quote, which originated with Benjamin Franklin (or, who knows; Poor Richard may even have been quoting an earlier source!).

Reply to Rushdie

Re: "Yes, This Is About Islam" February 2002 — Salman Rushdie would like the Islamist world to "take on board the secularist-humanist princi-

ples on which the modern [world] is based." Let's look at some fine examples of countries which have adopted the principles of secular-humanism, which is based on the idea that man is not subject to a higher being, but only government, thereby replacing any sort of god with government: Communist China — a shining example of freedom. Soviet Union, ditto. Cambodia, ditto. Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Shintoism, humanism, or any other religion can be used by the wicked to suck-er the ignorant into following the path of destruction. Bin Laden and his ilk want power, and perhaps economic gains for their group. Islam is a convenient tool to those ends.

Would Salman Rushdie feel better if the World Trade Center was destroyed in the name of humanism?

Dennis White
Flagler, CO

Forty years ago, this writer brought home from a stint in West Germany a Nazi belt buckle, embossed Gott Mit Uns ("God With Us"). It has been our observation that most of the time when an idea or movement has to wrap itself in the flag, or assume the approval of deity, it probably isn't a good idea — and we suspect the flag or deity referenced would not approve.

River City Sheaths

Read *SOF* since #1. Need e-mail address of producers of concealment system for Bagwell's Bowie knife.

Helmut Leiner
Germany

The outfit you reference is River City Sheaths (Mike Sastre), Box 421, Hamilton, OH 45012. Their e-mail address is rivercitysheaths@aol.com.

Thanks a Lott

I enjoyed Prof. Lott's article on the fallacies of gun control. It is discouraging at times to read that the gun grabbers like Kennedy, Shumer, Fineststein et al. are doing their best to remove all guns from law abiding citizens under the guise of taking away guns from the criminals and terrorists. The folks in England and Australia found out that laws only apply to "law abiding" citizens and not criminals or terrorists.

Guess they don't realize without guns we will see the sharp rise in crime like the above countries.

Joe Guarraci
Via e-mail

Distancing Green Berets from Candy-Strippers, Strap-Hangers and Terrorist Spies

The article written by Frank Hopkins ... on page 44 titled "bin Laden's [sic] Blueprint for Terror" is so misleading the first paragraph states: "a sergeant serving with the U.S. Army

Special Forces."

In fact the author should have stated that the individual was only assigned to the U.S. Army Special Forces and was not qualified to either wear the SF tab, or wear the beret with full flash.

[Ed note: this line was a direct quote from a U.S. Department of State paper, and it is factual: Mohamed was a sergeant, and according to his records — of which we have a copy — he served with HHC 1st SOCOM and later with SVC CO 5th SFG(A) at Ft. Bragg.]

On page 45: "by a Special-Forces-trained former U.S. Army Sergeant." In fact the individual was not a sergeant Special Forces Trained. On Page 47 at the top: "who trained them? It would appear that the U.S. Army Special Forces did."

This is simple BS; the individual copied manuals that in fact could have been order[sic] from sources advertising in the SOF and other paramilitary publications like U.S. Calvary [sic], etc., he wrote his own version and quoted directly in some cases from unclassified training manuals.

[We did not say he was Special Forces-qualified, rather that he was Special Forces-trained, which he was, as indicated by his Army records. His man-

ual appears to have been researched from many Western, East European and Islamic sources — and he also lifted material wholecloth from classified U.S. Army manuals. As his records reflect no action was taken on his application for a security clearance, one can only speculate where he got such material.]

In no place did the author inform the readers that the individual former (Egyptian Officer) came to the U.S. under the Foreign Military Assistance program from Egypt and attended the watered down SF "orientation course" that is politically geared in which foreign officers do not fail, he never was a qualified Special Forces individual in any sense.

[Note that the first word in the story is "Egyptian." He was in the Egyptian Army (a captain) when he graduated from the Special Forces Officers course — we have a copy of his diploma — and according to his 201 file a U.S. citizen when serving with 1st SOCOM and the 5th SFG(A). As this was a story on his terrorist training activities and the manual he wrote, it was not the place for all the bizarre details of the man himself, which are subject of a subsequent story.]

Look up his MOS in the U.S. Army.
[We did as a matter of course in

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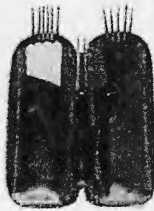
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preparing this story: He enlisted in November of '86 for training in MOS 76C10, records and parts specialist, was trained in it, and served in that MOS with 1st SOCOM and 5th SFG(A). He had also gone through basic airborne school in '81.]

This does a disservice to everyone when writing like this is allowed to be published. It is inaccurate, misleading and an insult to the U.S. Army Special Forces.

It certainly was not up to the standards that SOF has been working to reach over this long haul.

Charles L. Berg, SFC U.S. Army Special Forces, Ret.

(MACVSOG 66-65, Recon Team 10)

We don't know if we have trouble writin' readin', or if you have trouble readin' writin' — but we take mild umbrage at the story being called "misleading," and strong umbrage at it being called inaccurate. No facts were misstated and every fact stated is documentable — whether you find them distasteful or not. As far as insults, some might assert that the XVIII Airborne Corps and Ft. Bragg insulted the uniform when they recognized the "patriotism, valor, fidelity and professional excellence" of this treacherous SOB and made him an NCO, as did USAJFKSWCS when they awarded him the Army Commendation Medal, and as did 1st SOCOM when they awarded him the Army Achievement Medal.]

Gerecht Thesis Flawed

I have heard more than enough of the Gerecht thesis that CIA is incapable of operating in the Third World because it does not have operatives who can pass for natives. To me, this shows a poor understanding of how modern intelligence operations are conducted. The days of dedicated scholar/warriors such as T.E. Lawrence or E.M. Bailey who played the Great Game by personally operating in places like Hedjaz or Kashgar or Tashkent is over and has been for some time.

Similarly, the great Comintern agents are long gone. What modern intelligence services do with regard to denied areas is recruit/hire people who can pass for native or travel freely therein: contract agents, or field agents. In an analogous situation in which I was involved, a third-country national principal agent was instrumental in gathering intelligence. He spoke the local language fluently and had good cover for

being there. As a principal agent he had the capability and will of recruiting sources himself, and the means (often electronic) of communicating intelligence and vetting sources with his case officer in another country. There is also a small but extremely talented corps of non-official cover case officers who do speak the language, cross borders into hostile areas, assume false identities, meet agents and collect intelligence.

As one who has run counterterrorist operations, I can personally attest to the impediments to such operations the Clinton rules created. Many potential useful sources are frankly lowlifes — drug dealers (many terrorists deal drugs to sustain their lifestyles), black-market operators, and other small-time criminals who may have access to terrorist groups because of ethnic/family ties. Often they are brought to our attention by friendly foreign police services who lack the funds or charter to run these types against CT targets. Under the Clinton rules, it was nearly impossible to get bureaucratic approval to run any such asset because they did not promise immediate, high-level access and intelligence return to offset their "undesirability." And yet good CT information had sometimes come from such types.

With regard to DO hostility to the Northern Alliance, this is absurd. I, and several colleagues, had the greatest admiration and respect for A.S. Masood.

Frederick Wattering (DO case officer, retired)

Power to the Publisher

I'd like to thank you for a number of things, SOF: for writing and assembling an on-target, crap-free magazine; for not being afraid to use the right words for the problems afflicting our nation; for never sacrificing content for PC bull; for opening my eyes with your hard-hitting material; for being unafraid of retaining the wonderful razor-edge reporting that keeps your magazine unique and above and beyond the mainstream media.

Aza Derman
Bronx, NY

SOF welcomes your questions, comments and well-reasoned criticism. Send Flak letters to editor@sofmag.com or by snail mail to Soldier Of Fortune, Attn: Flak, 5735 Arapahoe Ave., #A5, Boulder, CO 80303. ✉



The Submission of Islam

BY JACK WHEELER

In 1993, Harvard professor Samuel Huntington wrote a famous article entitled "The Clash of Civilizations," in which he posited an historically calamitous struggle between Western Civilization and Islam. Thanks to Osama bin Laden, that struggle is now over. Islam has lost. It is finished as a world force capable of challenging the West.

Huntington foresaw an epic battle lasting decades, if not the entire 21st century. Thanks to George W. Bush, victory was secured by the West in months.

We should be infinitely thankful that so often, evil and stupid come together as a package deal. Hitler could have treated the Ukrainians, who threw flowers upon his troops welcoming them as liberators from Stalin, as human beings and thereby defeated the Soviet Union. He would never have ended up in the Berlin bunker. Tojo could have attacked Vladivostok instead of Pearl Harbor, dividing up Russia with Hitler and denying FDR a pretext for entering WWII. Osama bin Laden didn't have the brains to tell the difference between Bill Clinton, Al Gore, William Cohen and George W., Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld. And thus OBL has catalyzed the demise of his own religion.

At present, some 800 million people in the world are Muslims. (The oft-repeated claim of over 1 billion is inflated, just as is the claim of 6-7 million Muslims in the U.S.: The real figure is less than 2 million.) Whatever chance there was of these numbers expanding before September 11, it's gone now. The questions folks contemplating conversion to Islam are asking is: Why should I participate in a faith that allows its followers such as OBL to disgrace, insult, and humiliate it in front of the entire world? This is a faith that is either an impotent loser or simply doesn't care any more about its worshippers. Whichever, it is not a faith worthy of worship. It certainly is not a faith to be feared.

An old adage in boxing says when you have your opponent on the ropes, you don't let up and show any mercy — you put him away. Western Civilization has Islam on the ropes. The Taliban are little more than a repulsive memory. Muslim terrorists are being hunted down on six continents. All the bozos in al-Qaeda " sleeper cells " can't sleep nights worrying that captured intelligence documents have fingered them. Saddam Hussein can't spend five hours in the same location for fear a 5,000-pound GBU-28 might come down on his head. Iran is ripe for the overthrow of the mullahs. Medieval tyrannies like Sudan and Yemen are desperately trying to be cooperative. After decades of denial, Western governments (except France, as always) are finally recognizing Palestinian terrorism as a form of Nazism. Now is not the time to let Islam slip away with the usual blame-America/blame-Israel rope-a-dope. It is time to force the

advantage, force Islam to join the civilized world, and KO Islamic barbarism.

No more putting up with petulant shining by Islamic intellectuals about the West. Islam's only path to survival, for a Phoenix-resurrection from the ashes, is submission to Western values. In Arabic, "Islam" means "submission." Derivatively it means "peace," the peace of soul that comes through submission to the will of Allah. Now "Islam" must also mean submission to the basic moral values of the civilized world. Only by such submission — to freedom of speech/press/religion, free and fair elections, economic liberty providing women with equal rights, all the standard freedoms we demand for ourselves — will Islam have peace with the world.

The alternative is for hundreds of millions of men, women, and children to continue living in unfree poverty and hopeless bitterness. It is either-or. For Islam to survive, it must submit. It must be reinvented. The obvious starting point is using Turkey, the great secular democratic exception in the Islamic world, as a guideline. How such a reinterpretation of Islam is to be accomplished by Islam — Arab in particular — scholars and leaders remains to be seen. What should be seen quite clearly right now, however, is that such a reinterpretation must take place.

All doctrines can be interpreted in a host of ways. It has been argued, for example, that a key difference between Allah and Jehovah, the deity of the Jews and Jesus, is that man was created in the latter's image but not the former's. That is, for Jews and Christians, all human beings have a spark of the Divine; for Muslims, they do not, for man is so far removed from Allah that the Islamic deity has no trace of humanity. A supple Islamic mind should be able to inject an element of the human into the concept of Allah.

Rigidity and inflexibility, whether in a physical structure such as a glass, or a social structure, such as the Soviet Union or present-day Islam, renders it fragile. One moment it is unyielding and incapable of change. Subject it to sufficient stress, and the next moment it is shattered into pieces. Surely it is obvious to a growing number of Islamic intellectuals that their religion as currently constituted stands in grave danger of going the way of the former Soviet Union.

There will be other clashes to come, with other civilizations. The one with China could make this one with Islam look like a cakewalk. Yet we should take solace in the triumph or our values and culture once again. We have more cause than ever to be optimistic about our country's cultural and economic future. American will continue to thrive and flourish.

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The Big Dog in Kashmir

BY JACK WHEELER

My old friend Bob Brown called me the other day. Bob is the publisher of *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine, and together we've been chased around Nicaragua by Sandinistas, bombed by Soviet jets in Afghanistan, behaved inappropriately in Bangkok's Phat Phong Alley, and engaged in other sundry adventures over the past few decades.

Bob wanted to know if I would write an article for *SOF* on "Taliban John" Walker, the American captured fighting for al-Qaeda in Mazar-e-Sharif. I declined. "There's nothing to write about," I explained. "We're in a war. He's a traitor, caught willfully fighting with the enemy. Screw trials and indictments. You line him up in front of a wall and shoot him. End of story. What more is there to say?"

Some issues are simple, with straightforward solutions. America's War on Muslim Terrorism is one. It is good vs. evil with no shades of gray, and the perpetrators of evil are to be hunted down and liquidated. There are other issues, however, issues of world-class danger and significance, that are not simple and have no straightforward solution. Premier among them is the world's best chance for full-blown nuclear war: Pakistan and India in Kashmir.

There are no good guys here — except for the Kashmiris trapped in the middle. Kashmir is a geopolitical Gordian Knot, interwoven by Indian and Pak perfidy. At the time of Partition (the British Raj divided into independent Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan in 1947), Kashmir was a semi-independent region, 80% Muslim but ruled by a Hindu warlord named Hari Singh. 101 years earlier, the Brits had sold Kashmir to his great-grandfather, Gulab Singh, for 7.5 million rupees (\$170K today). The Kashmiris were to be given a choice: Join India, join Pakistan, become independent. To

prevent an election that most likely would choose independence, the Indians sent in armed soldiers and the Paks sent in armed "volunteers." Hari Singh signed Kashmir over to India, the local Kashmiris revolted, and the first Indo-Pak war was on.

The result was a ceasefire Line of Control cutting the entire region in two which remains the *de facto* border today. India continues to occupy the Kashmir Valley with brutal military force, its soldiers having murdered tens of thousands of Kashmiris. Pakistan continues to send armed "volunteers" to support local guerrilla movements. The Indian and Pak armies continue to shoot at each other, especially up in the glaciers of the Karakorum Mountains. Neither India nor Pakistan want to solve the problem. Kashmir is the rationale for their huge armies, their massive defense budgets — and for their nuclear arsenals. These are two nasty little wolves fighting over a bone. There is only one way to get them to stop. The potential for the fight to go nuclear mandates that the Big Dog pull them apart and force a solution down their throats.

GW has clearly demonstrated in the past few months he is the biggest, baddest dog on the planetary block. This gives him a window of opportunity to ram through a deal. The Indians may huff about "American arrogance" — but in fact, there is no one on earth more insufferably arrogant than a Hindu Brahmin, who thinks he is a superior form of humanity sitting on top of his racist caste system. The Indians must be made to see that their foe of the future is China, that only an alliance with the U.S. gives them any chance of military parity with China, and that they cannot achieve any sort of major world power status without solving Kashmir.

While the Indians exhibit world-class arrogance, the Paks exhibit world-class duplicity. During the 1980s, the Pak intelligence agency (ISI) ran the CIA around with a ring through its nose in Afghanistan. The ISI set up the Taliban, and continues to hoodwink the endlessly naive CIA, which has enabled Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar to evade capture. ISI founder Hamid Gul has been funneling al-Qaeda fugitives and Muslim radicals into Kashmir to inflame the situation. His goal is to convert Pakistan into a Taliban-like Islamist state. Gul must be incarcerated and the ISI dismantled.

At a summit meeting in Camp David, GW could explain these necessities to Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Atal Vajpayee. Then he could get out a map and give them a geography lesson: "Let's forget history for a moment and both of your conflicting territorial claims. Let's divide Kashmir into four regions: Ladakh,



Kishtwar-Jammu, Baltistan-Hunza, and the Kashmir Valley. Ladakh is Tibetan Buddhist. It's in India and there is no doubt its people look upon India as protecting them from China which has destroyed Tibet. Kishtwar-Jammu is Hindu, with very few Moslems. It's also in India and should remain so. Baltistan-Hunza, together with the small "Azad" area are 99% Moslem, and are in Pakistan. It's ridiculous that India should claim these regions. So I want you two right now to agree that Ladakh and Kishtwar-Jammu belong to India, that Baltistan-Hunza and Azad belong to Pakistan, and for you to relinquish conflicting claims on them.

"The real problem, as I see it, is with the Vale itself, Srinigar and the Kashmir Valley. It's controlled by India yet its people are predominately Muslim. I can understand why India would want to keep and Pakistan would want to have one of the most famously beautiful places in the world, the fabled 'Vale of Kashmir.' You two are going to have to work this out together. You cannot have war. War will destroy you both, destroy your countries socially, politically, and economically. You are neighbors and you are going to learn to get along. Admit that settling Kashmir simply must be done, period. Giving up your conflicting claims on the other regions and focusing on the Vale itself is 80% of the solution right there. Perhaps some sort of joint power-sharing arrangement between you, with the Kashmiris having autonomy over their local affairs, is the way. Use Kashmir as an opportunity to live and prosper together, instead of a way to spread nuclear radiation across the globe. Make money, not war. That's the way it is, guys — and I'm not letting you out of here until you sign an agreement on it."

I have traveled through most of Kashmir — visited hidden Tibetan monasteries and rafted the Zanskar River in Ladakh, lived on a houseboat on Srinigar's Dal lake, hunted black bear in the mountains above the Vale, witnessed sunrise on 25,000 ft. Rakaposhi in Hunza. The entire place is impossibly magnificent. It is time for the Big Dog to brush aside Indo-Pak sado-masochistic egos. Peace in Kashmir must be made compulsory —for the alternative is global nuclear rain.

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15th MEU (SOC) Blows Away Fleeing Taliban

BY SERGEANT JOSEPH R. CHENELLY

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (11 January 2002) — With an engulfing flash in the night, enemy forces were snuffed out and the message was clear — U.S. Marines from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) pushed far past their Forward Operating Base at Camp Rhino and weren't allowing any Taliban to escape during Operation Swift Freedom 7 December 2001.

The MEU's Light Armored Reconnaissance Company (LAR) and Combined Anti-Armored Team (CAAT) emerged from the rough, desolate, desert terrain after more than 20 hours of driving from Rhino to interdict enemy traffic between the Southern cities of Kandahar and Lashkar Gah.

The mission was to cut off a major supply route, call attention to the Marines' presence, and impede those fleeing as Kandahar fell to Anti-Taliban freedom fighters. A major road, tagged Route 1, was chosen and the Marines positioned themselves to intercept Taliban running from the fierce fighting in the city.

Two platoons of HMMWVs mounted with TOW missile systems, automatic grenade launchers, and .50-caliber heavy machine guns pushed east and west to monitor traffic exiting the two cities of interest. One watched for bad guys coming out of Kandahar to the east and the other reported those leaving Lashkar Gah.

Reports of a Sports Utility Vehicle heading from Kandahar warmed the chilly night.

Marine scouts stretched a 30-foot coil of concertina wire across the narrow, asphalt road. No more than one-and-a-half typical American cars could fit side by side. The wire was staked into place and glowing chemlights were affixed to the wire to make it visible to drivers.

The scouts pulled back a couple hundred feet from the road, and snipers sighted in their Barrett .50 rifles — modified to Marine Corps specifications. A team from the 15th

MEU's (SOC) Force Reconnaissance platoon hunkered down at the bottom of a steep incline on the south side of the road with the intent to immediately catch the approaching SUV from behind.

Five minutes, then 10 — still no vehicle. As the 15th minute ticked away, two bright, white lights came around a bend in the road. The moment of truth arrived. If the vehicle blew through the roadblock, there would be little chance of survival for the occupants of the SUV.

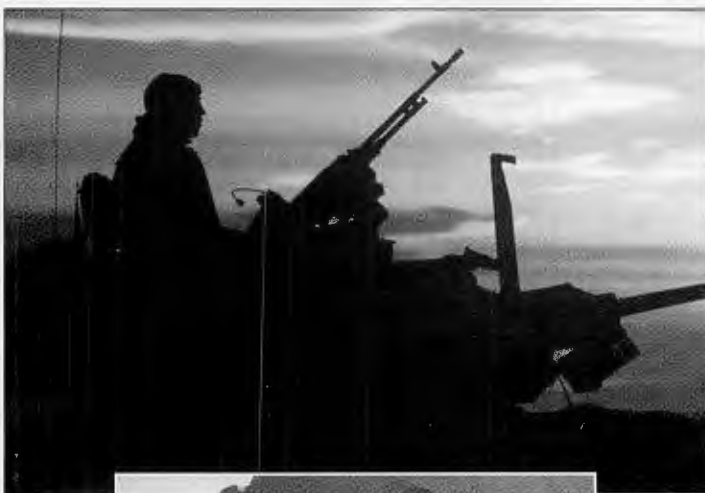
The driver began to slow when the illuminated blockade came into view, but he decided to attempt to run through the barrier. A distinct shriek filled the cold night air as concertina wire raked across the vehicle's hood, down its bumper and around the front axle. The wire was still staked to the ground causing the vehicle to stop after 20 feet.

Force Reconnaissance's vehicle hugged the SUV's right rear fender before it stopped. Shouts in the local language ordering hands in the sky came from the Marines.

"Our bright lights gave us a clear view inside the vehicle," a Force Reconnaissance gunnery sergeant said afterward. "We could see several men inside. The ones facing us had blankets wrapped around them. They dropped the blankets. They had AK-47s pointed at us. We opened fire and there may have been fuel in there or something because a fire started almost instantly."

The sniper, who positioned himself atop a Light Armored Vehicle a couple hundred feet away, fired two shots.

"I was aimed in on the front passenger seat because it was closest to me when Force rolled up on them," a scout sniper sergeant said. When they opened fire the vehicle was in flames. No one had time to get out — until it was too late. I took one shot into the car and then a guy jumped out on fire with a rifle in his



courtesy USMC



Chief Photographer's Mate Johnny Bivens, USN

U.S. Marines with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) conduct a Cordon and Search Raid at a suspected Al Qaeda hideout.

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hand. One shot took him down.”

The intense heat began igniting an obvious ammunition cache. Rounds, including rocket-propelled grenades, shot in every direction.

“We couldn’t really tell if they were able to fire at us or if it was just all the rounds cooking-off,” a Force Recon staff sergeant said. “It looked like an Arnold Schwarzenegger movie.”

The Force Reconnaissance Marines left the massive ball of flames burning and the seven men inside on the road for all to see. The point had been made. Later the Marines learned they had been fired upon, pointing out a bullet hole in their vehicle.

Another report came over the radio as the Marines began their retrograde. The SUV just destroyed turned out to be leading a seven-vehicle convoy. Air-support assets were alerted.

“My biggest concern was to get all of our guys out of the area so the jets could do their job,” a captain forward air controller nicknamed “Neck” said. “The rest of the convoy saw the lead vehicle blow up and pulled off the road. They headed north for a ways and got out and disbursed on foot. After about five minutes they got back in and headed north. The planes started dropping bombs shortly after.”

The ground shook and the sky glowed behind the Marines as F-14, F-16 and F-18s dropped two 1,000-pound and six 500-pound laser-guided bombs on the Taliban convoy.

“The jets scanned the area after the strikes,” the controller explained. “As expected, there was nothing left moving.”

Estimates by American forces figured about 50 Taliban killed in a matter of a few minutes on Route 1. Local Afghans claimed about 150 bodies were taken away the next day, according to Neck. All of the American service members returned to their patrol base unscathed.

“The number of casualties inflicted during this interdiction isn’t as significant as the message it sends — the Marines are here, we’re ready to fight and the Taliban can’t do anything about it,” a U.S. government representative said. “The word will spread fast.”

The next day the Afghan forces opposing the Taliban in Kandahar claimed the city.

Over the next several nights the Marines returned to Route 1 with the intention to once again stop traffic. There wasn’t anything to stop. ✕



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USMC Sniper Rifle

BY SGT. ANDREW D. POMYKAL

Marines from the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) are field-testing the Corps' latest addition to its arsenal, the Designated Marksman Rifle M-14, in the desert surroundings here.

Marine Corps weapons' experts have coupled older match-grade M-14 rifle barrels, already in service, with a modern, fiberglass stock that offers the shooter an ergonomic pistol grip. The 7.62mm barrels were also retrofitted to accept a suppressor. The weather-resistant stock has a scope rail to accommodate different sights. Spacer plates and adjustable cheek pieces were incorporated into the design to allow an individual shooter to custom fit the 36-inch-long, 15-lb. rifle. The DMR has a maximum effective range of 1,000 meters and accepts a 20-round magazine.

"This is the most accurate, combat weapon in the world," said Sgt. Dalton P. Baker, a precision weapons repairman.



USMC/Sgt. Andrew D. Pomykal

The Corps' new M-14 DMR (Designated Marksmanship Rifle) is undergoing field-testing by 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC) Marines deployed here in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. A Serberger suppressor is mounted on a custom muzzle break.

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"For accuracy and durability, it can't be beaten."

The DMR is the creation of several precision weapons repairmen from Marine Corps Combat Development Command, Quantico, Va., Staff Sergeant Raymond Conrad is heading up production to supply the semi-automatic rifle to Fleet Marine units, according to Baker of San Antonio.

"This ain't your standard issue rifle. Every piece is fitted by hand. We've made nine so far and eight of them are here. It is a perfect weapon for security from the high ground and ideal for [Fleet Anti-terrorist Security Team] companies, military police and explosive ordnance disposal technicians," said Baker. "It offers a happy medium between the M16A2 and the M40 [sniper rifle]."

Baker estimates that by using older components to fabricate the DMR, they are saving the Corps a significant amount of money, especially considering the cost of research and development required to field such arms.

"A commercial equivalent would cost somewhere between twenty-eight and thirty-two thousand dollars a piece," he said. We can build this rifle in two days, mostly because it takes 24 hours for the [fiberglass] epoxy to dry, and it only costs a little more than six hundred dollars in materials."

"This is a superior weapon. It gives us an awesome capability," said Reconnaissance Marine Sgt. Jason E. Capozzoli, of Tallahassee, Fla. "The suppressor will really help to conceal a shooter's position during urban operations."

"The 3-pound trigger squeeze is great. I barely even have to pull," said Scout Sniper Cpl. Dustin Lee, of Reno, Nevada.

Baker also touted another advantage of the DMR.

"We've simplified repairs so that all armorers can perform [low level] maintenance," he said.

The DMR M-14 seems to be a crowd-pleaser among the sharpshooters of the 26th MEU (SOC) who will remain in place here until relieved by U.S. Army units. ✕

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Former EO Operatives Doing Dirty Work

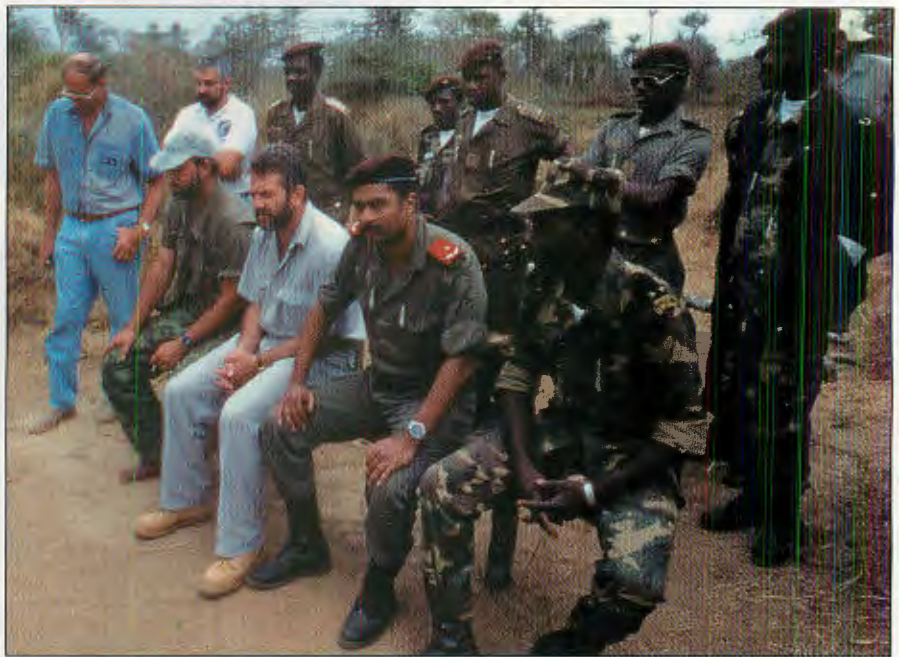
BY AL J. VENTER

While the South African mercenary group, Executive Outcomes (EO), is history, many of its old operatives are not. The word doing the rounds among some of the old merc haunts in Pretoria, Johannesburg and Durban is that there is work aplenty north of the border. Some of these activities — particularly training and support missions in Libya, the Sudan and Liberia — have Washington worried.

First reports concern Liberia, a country ripped apart by civil war and under the thumb of one of the worst of Africa's tyrants, Charles Taylor. Things got so bad there with Taylor supplying aid, material and weapons to rebels in neighboring Sierra Leone that Liberia has come under U.S. sanctions.

A UN report last year highlighted the activities of numerous South Africans who had provided Taylor with succor, among them a former South African Army Colonel Rindell, who once served as a military attaché at his country's embassy in D.C. While Rindell is no longer involved in this kind of activity, others are; among them some of the more prominent names of former special forces personnel who fought in Angola for EO.

The best known of these is Col. Hennie Blaauw, one a mainspring with No. 1 Reconnaissance Commando. He has been spotted in Monrovia, the Liberian capital, in the company of Liberian army commanders and other South African recruits. The word is that



NFD director Duncan Rykaart (on front seat with head of Angolan special forces) during parade at Lomba, Angola, at a time when Executive Outcomes was active in that country. To his immediate right is former Angolan POW Captain Wynand de Toit, who returned later to train the same people that he'd been fighting before. To his right is former Reece Commando Colonel Hennie Blaauw.

Blaauw and his men are helping Taylor counter a massive insurgency in the north of the country that stems directly from his former activities in Sierra Leone where the war has ended.

Almost all of it centered on diamonds and Taylor had set up a handy conduit through Monrovia to market these abroad. But he made a bad mistake using his irregular troops to foster revolution

in another neighbor, Guinea. And it's Guinea that has now hit back by providing Liberian dissidents with muscle.

There have been massive battles taking place in northern Liberia and Blaauw and his buddies were hired to try to normalize the situation. They have been only partially successful, because although Taylor is using Mi-8 helicopter gunships (flown by

Russians mercs) against the rebels, anti-Taylor sentiment among the majority of the population is too deep-rooted to halt the war. The rebels have declared their intention to fight on until they've taken Monrovia.

Elsewhere in Africa other old Angolan EO hands have been active doing work for Muammar Qaddafi's state security apparatus in Libya. A South African company that calls itself NFD is the one that is doing the dirt on that one.

An authoritative London report published by *Africa Confidential* states that the Libyan project in which NFD is involved includes training in infiltrating rebel bases and intelligence gathering. Also, it includes the use of helicopters (another source indicates Mi-24s) fitted with infrared cameras obtained from a South African government arms manufacturer Kentron.

A subsidiary of the giant Denel defense company which is doing contract work for various European aerospace firms — including SAAB, the Eurocopter and several British firms — Kentron during the Apartheid era originally worked closely with Israeli scientists to develop some of these products. The night vision and infrared equipment being marketed by the company, for instance, is similar to that being used by Israel's security forces. So are at least two versions of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) which South Africa has been exporting to unknown recipients.



Mi-24 (Hind in NATO argot) typical of those in use by both the Libyan and Sudanese air forces.

Interestingly, another product produced by South African weapons factories in conjunction with a powerful Israeli technical input is a laser gun sight and ranging device for tanks. With the accession of Nelson Mandela to power in 1993 (and South Africa and Israel having become estranged), Syria promptly ordered several hundred of these to fit to its own T-72 main battle tanks.

The order was a done deal. Then it was squashed when Washington — at the behest of Jerusalem — warned that if it supplied Damascus with the

equipment, the diplomatic repercussions could be severe. South Africa, the Americans said, would have to look carefully at future relations with the West. Eventually South Africa backed-off.

Much of the stuff involved in these clandestine deals is hi-tech and on the restricted list. Because there are laws in place in South Africa about such matters (including hiring mercs, which is now illegal and one of the reasons why EO closed shop) it could clearly never have been sold to another country — Libya especially — without some kind of government sanction.

But there is a loophole. The cabinet of South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki is top heavy with Muslim fundamentalists and in South Africa, you need that kind of clout to make things happen. Indeed, Pretoria has close ties with Qaddafi. The word in Pretoria is that the order to supply this stuff came from the top.

Now there is a new development that has caught the public eye. A contract that is widely known in international military circles has emerged between the NFD merc group and another rogue state, the Sudan. This is to provide security for the protection of that country's oil fields.

The British paper said that some of the work involved former EO personnel to train Sudanese special forces in counterinsurgency operations. This is a serious matter, since Islamic Sudan has been at war for the past 18 years against the mainly Christian Southern



Brigadier Nick van den Bergh, one of the directors of the merc group NFD (with his wife) talks to another NFD operator, Duncan Rykaart, at an Angolan function during their ED days.

Continued on page 76

Afghanistan's STINGER WAR

The Bear Trap

BY AL J. VENTER

You want to know why it's dumb to attack Jalalabad? Because it's dumb to lose ten thousand lives ... And if we do take it, what's going to happen? The Russians will bomb the shit out of us, that's what.

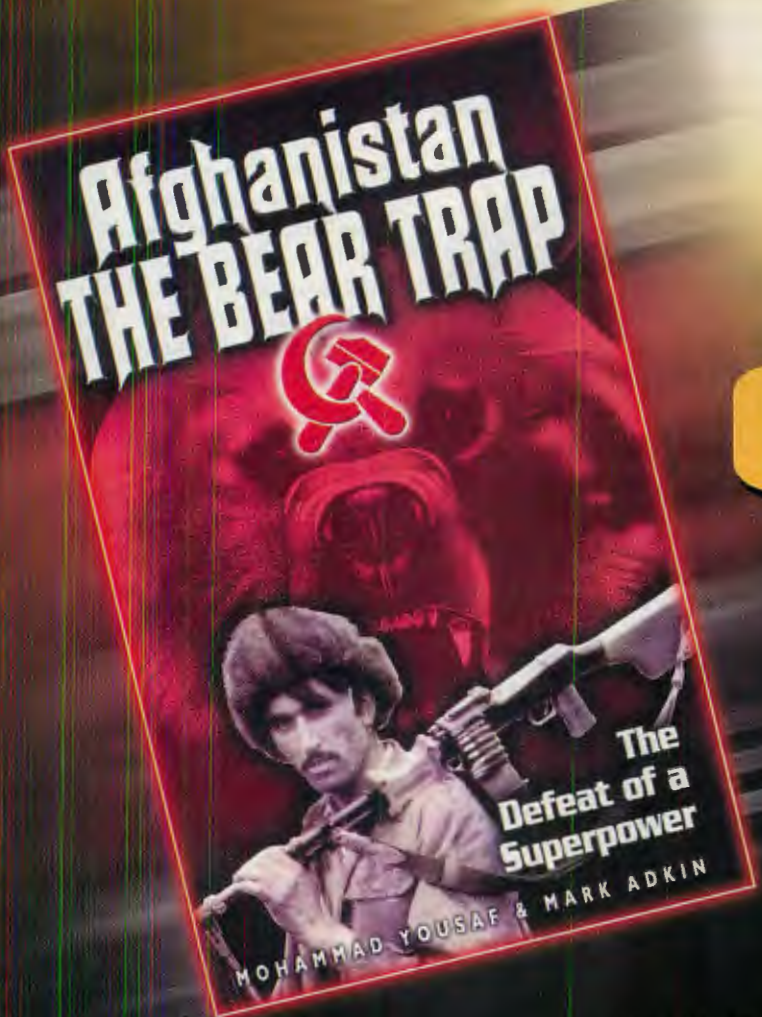
— Abdul Haq, Mujahideen commander

Early in the present Afghanistan campaign, scuttlebutt among some of the American aircrews centered on Stingers: nothing serious, but some of the fliers were concerned.

The threat from these missiles, though unsubstantiated, was real enough to cause concern. No matter that the missiles were dated, their IFF (identify friend or foe) systems not working or that the tubes themselves were dinged from having been carted around mountains on the backs of mules for 15 years, they were there, a palpable reality.

Also, there were soldiers facing the Americans who had been trained in their use. At one stage not long after the offensive began, there were even orders given for navy bombers to keep to higher altitudes during sorties.

Whether stingers are still a threat in



Afghanistan is moot. The fact is that these 5-foot infrared, heat-seeking missiles with a maximum effective range of 14,400 feet, remain lethal. We saw some of them being removed from Taliban arms caches in television newscasts on the subject.

Truth is, in the last half of the guerrilla struggle against the Soviets, the U.S. was supplying Stingers at a rate of between 1,000 and 1,200 a month. These came with 250 grip stocks in each batch. Do the math and that amounts to an awful lot of them.

At the same time, no single weapon has ever played as seminal a role in any modern conflict. This modest little man-portable system with a maximum velocity of Mach 2.2 (with which the mujahideen eventually achieved a 70-75% success rate) swung the tide of battle within a few short months. That statistic alone is significant: At about the same time, the comparable U.S. Army figure was a couple of points lower.

The first time the missiles were deployed on 25 September 1986, a squad of 35 mujahideen secreted themselves in the sparse scrub about a mile from Jalalabad airport. They waited three hours for a squadron of eight Mi-24 Hinds to arrive. Intelligence reports had earlier indicated that they would be in before nightfall.

In this very first strike with Stingers, of the three fire-and-forget missiles launched, the first one out of its tube malfunctioned. The other two went straight in for the kill. The immediate shock of witnessing incoming projectiles hit their buddies caused the pilots of two more Mi-24s to crash-land in their haste to get their wheels onto the ground.

It was the Stinger's first battlefield victory, having become operational in Germany in 1981 and been supplied to the 82nd Airborne Division the following year. While Stingers were taken into Grenada in 1983, they were never fired in anger until they were handed to mujahideen cadres in Afghanistan.

Warfighting 101

If the United States is going to be fighting more wars in the distant flung outposts of the world — Somalia, the Sudan, Yemen, the Philippines, whatever — it military leaders can't do much better than put the book from which these anecdotes are taken on the curricula of every staff college in the country.

Afghanistan: The Bear Trap, is truly a classic in intelligence reporting. It was written by Mohammad Yousaf not long after the war ended.

When I asked a London friend — he is guarded about his ties to British intelligence because he goes in there all the time — whether he had read it, he replied curtly: "four times, no less." He added that I'd understand once I'd got through it myself.

From page one, the imprint of its co-author, former British Army officer Mark Adkin is unmistakable. From his lack of hyperbole and no-nonsense style, one gets the impression that his brief was to offer no embellishment. For that reason alone, the book is an excellent read, especially at a time when so many Afghan titles are suddenly appearing on the bookstands: Supply usually equals supply, usually to the detriment of quality.

For several years the book escaped the attention of most pundits, at least until it was reissued a few months ago. For a start it dispels a plethora of myths about Third World army officers, including the most widespread one of all: that the majority of them are so incompetent that most can't even

organize a decent route march.

A Brigadier General in the Pakistani army, Yousaf, by all accounts, was apparently not only a damn good soldier but also an outstanding logistics organizer and intelligence officer. More pertinent, he hadn't been formally trained in either discipline. As he says of himself, it was a most unusual choice because at the time of his appointment he was a brigade commander on a divisional exercise at Quetta.

Backed by a staff of about 60 officers and 300 NCOs and men, Yousaf used Pakistan's ultra-secretive Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) to train more than 80,000 mujahideen, the majority of them in a succession of primitive camps that for security reasons were spread about all over the country. Against insuperable odds, he managed to keep their locations secret from the Soviets for the duration of the war. For its part, Moscow spent good money and effort to try to disrupt his efforts, including eventually killing Zia and most of his top command as well as Arnold Raphael, the American Ambassador in Islamabad, and his defense attaché, Brigadier-General Herbert Wassom.

Lessons Learned

With American forces looking as they are going to be in Afghanistan for a while yet, it's worth looking at some of detail that has emerged from the earlier, *Mujahideen* war against the Soviets.

As Yousaf explains in great detail, everything that the guerrillas needed was brought in overland from Pakistan, often on peoples' backs. Supplies followed a circuitous route, starting once the ship had berthed at Karachi, and then by rail and truck to Peshawar and on into the interior of the embattled neighbor. While costs to keep rebels fighting close to the border supplied were high and escalating all the time, they were nothing like getting essentials to the north, near the borders of the USSR.

The price of moving a single mortar shell from Karachi to Mazar-i-Sharif, for instance, was \$1,100. Which was why the CIA's monthly bill for transport alone in this war in the mid-80s was in the vicinity of \$1.5 million. Small wonder that some muj units found it easier and cheaper to buy what they needed in the way of firepower from Soviet or Afghan military posts in the areas in which they were operational.

Bigger, more daring attacks sometimes involved larger weapons. These also had been lugged across mountains, most times on the backs of animals.

A 30-man muj squad was specially trained in the firing and handling of the 107mm Chinese multiple-barreled rocket launcher (MBRL) used in the attack on Bagram, a well protected Soviet air base with a large garrison. With its 12 barrels and a range of a modest 9 kilometers, it wasn't the ideal weapon for the purpose, but it was chosen to fit the bill because of its impressive firepower, a factor which counted among the insurgents. But for that purpose, it had to be set up just outside the airfield's ring of defensive posts and the risks were enormous.

First, the village of Koh-i-Safi (see map) was chosen as a kick-off point. That needed a five-week wait while runners were dispatched to haul men from that specific mujahideen location back to Peshawar. Since the start of hostilities, the area unit commander with roughly 400 guerrillas had been active there, using to good advantage hundreds of caves with which to provide concealment and shelter from Soviet bombing.

Moving the MBRL was another matter. For weeks, mules hauled barrels, wheels and rocket stands piecemeal through

the mountains, traveling mainly at night. Three mules were needed for the weapon itself. There was also a mule for every four rockets. Just to get the system into position required a dozen animals and about 25 men. The tally included the firing crew, an OP party, a protection party as well as mule handlers.

At the end of it, attacks took place over two nights and in all, only two or three Soviet planes were hit. Surprisingly, this was regarded as a good result at the time.

Immediately afterwards, obviously on instructions straight from Moscow, the Soviets let loose all merry hell. The entire regional security command — including a *Spetsnaz* force — descended on the Koh-i-Safi valley.

Interestingly, as Yousaf explains, from the plan's conception to its implementation, four months had elapsed. Afghanistan in those days was a slow, grinding war. In the end though, consequences warranted it.

On Stinger missiles, Yousaf makes the point that the prime reason why the U.S. took so long to supply these valuable weapons was partly the fault of President Zia. It was his view that once they had been taken into service, these deadly little devices might fall into fundamentalist hands. They could be used against him, he told both his advisors and the local office of the CIA.

As it was, he was eventually killed while flying in an American-supplied C-130 that had been sabotaged by the Soviets.

Another reason for the tardiness in supplying such weapon was the fear voiced in Congress that some of these missiles might be captured by the enemy. The Russians might get their paws on one and make their own by a process of reverse engineering, somebody argued. For good reason. The Stinger had always been a generation or two ahead of Soviet SAM-7s. Later versions were even better than the more advanced SAM-16 that some insurgent organizations are using these days.

An even greater worry involved the Iranian equation. If that happened, Langley said at the time, who knew where they would end up. They could even be ferreted to Europe or America and used against commercial airlines.

Then, almost as if planned, an early batch was routed from Pakistan to the northern Herat area. Instead of taking a direct route across the desert to the immediate west of Kandahar, the group hauling them made a detour through Iranian territory. Tehran's border guards promptly arrested the party and confiscated four Stinger launchers and 16 missiles.

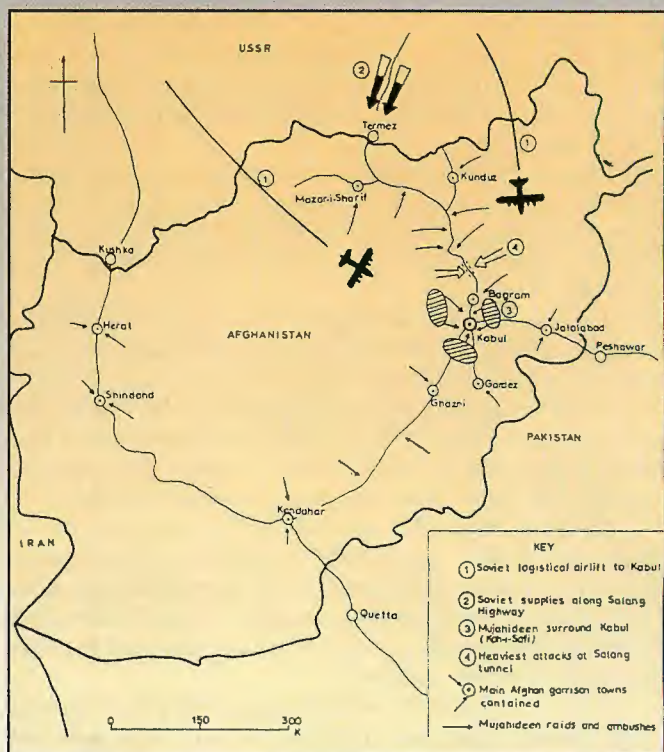
Pakistan spent the rest of the war trying to get them back, but was never successful.

Where They Went Wrong

What emerges from these pages is that the Soviets should really never have lost in Afghanistan.

The recruits that Yousaf brought in from the field — most of them illiterates and some with only a modicum of understanding of matters military — he successfully molded into an army of competent, aggressive guerrillas. He did so quickly. Within two or three days he had most of them competently firing the full range of Soviet squad weapons with which they were equipped. The same with a variety of larger items such as Mortars, RPG-7s, 12.7mm and 14.5mm anti-aircraft guns as well as the 82mm recoilless rifle. This was the same "no good" band of ruffians that ultimately broke the spirit of the pride of the Soviet military machine.

It was no easy task. Some of the recruits originated from such remote areas in the interior that there were those among



Yousaf admits nothing the muj did could have been successful without help from the CIA, including providing maps for every operation.

them who had never handled anything but flintlocks. Others were cutthroat bandits to whom discipline was as alien as pork, or as some of the weapons that they were required to master.

At the end of the day though, they were shooting Soviet MiG jet fighters and Mi-24 gunships out of the Afghan sky.

Syllabuses and curricula expanded rapidly as the war progressed, with all training in the hands of the Pakistanis. Subjects eventually included such esoterics as mine-laying and -clearing, demolition courses (to cover the destruction of bridges, electricity pylons, gas and oil pipelines) and intelligence. Among the skills imparted were road cratering, urban warfare (including sabotage techniques), the use of guided missiles — and more arcane military topics than anyone in Moscow imagined possible.

It was declared American policy from the start that its nationals should never be directly involved with the guerrillas: everything was left to surrogates, which is peculiar since in Africa, the CIA trained some UNITA guerrillas involved in the war against the Marxist MPLA government themselves, including how to operate Stingers.

Interestingly, the Kremlin leaders always believed that once they went in, as it eventually did late 1979, it would take the Soviet juggernaut only weeks to vanquish "this bunch of savages." Nine years later they were still mired in a war that seemed to go on forever. (See *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*, SOF, January 2002.)

Before Brigadier-General Yousaf was appointed to the Afghan Bureau of the ISI late 1983, his detractors said that what he was attempting to do was impossible.

Superficially, their rationale couldn't be faulted: at that stage barely 10,000 tons of arms were being funneled into the beleaguered territory. Four years later, using an elaborate series of supply pipelines that covered eight major routes and hundreds of secondary ones (together with half a hundred

border bases), his organization was pushing 65,000 tons of war material into Afghanistan a year.

Yousaf underscores many of the pitfalls associated with managing a war in the Third World. He also lifts the wraps on some of the astonishing gaffes the Americans were allowed to make.

Granted, some of these blunders might have been just that — mistakes in an alien, unfriendly environment. Others were culpable and cost the American taxpayer a mint. I doubt whether any of the perpetrators at Langley were ever called to account. More likely, some of the same people are active in the present phase of hostilities. Hopefully they're making a better show of it.

Like the shipment of Turkish weapons that dated from early in World War II and which were totally unsuited to conditions in the harsh terrain of a remote, rugged region of South Asia as big as Texas. In what seemed to be a generous gesture, the Turks made what seemed at the time a genuine effort to help with the war. Instead, it was nothing like that: It was a clearing out of trash. Altogether 60,000 WWII rifles, 8,000 light machine guns, 10,000 pistols together with a hundred million rounds of ammunition arrived at Karachi. Most were so badly corroded or faulty that they were dumped.

The same with what the Americans ordered from Egypt. Instead of sticking to tried and trusted Chinese ordnance, someone at Langley started buying in huge quantities of weapons, almost all of it from Cairean suppliers. Normally somebody would have been left behind to do spot checks on individual batches, but nothing like that took place. Instead, the stuff was loaded on to ships and sent east. Ammunition that should have been boxed, arrived in massive useless piles of loose rounds.

Someone in Washington spent good money buying 30,000

mortar rounds, all of them 82mm, which were found to be unusable: They had been allowed to rust and wouldn't fit the tubes. As Yousaf says, when he protested to Langley's local head honcho, he "seemed disinterested." And it apparently stayed that way until a congressional group arrived and observed some of the snafus at first hand.

Notably, all that was followed by the arrival of 100,000 antiquated .303 rifles, bought by the CIA from all places, India. As he suggested, it seemed that everybody with access to old stocks were heading for Washington to make money. Obviously, quite a few of the dealers were successful.

He makes a solid case for the unconscionable arrogance of some American policymakers in the field. Unlike the military, most had no practical experience on the ground: for the majority, this was their first real taste of war, even though never got anywhere near it. Many decisions, over a period of years, were made with no regard to the real needs of the Mujahideen.

After 1985 and, as he tells us, some rather vociferous behind-the-scenes protesting by Yousaf, things started to improve. But not before someone in London tried to fob Britain's Blowpipe anti-aircraft missile on to the rebels. That, too, was channeled through the CIA, irrespective of the fact that this weapon was totally unsuited for Afghan conditions. Unlike the fire-and-forget Stinger, the Blowpipe is wire-guided and its operator needs to stand exposed as he guides it manually into the target. Tough shit if there's another Mi-24 riding shotgun with the target bird.

Everybody — including Yousaf — knew that that weapon had been a disappointment to the British in the Falklands War. Also, it was obsolescent and was being replaced by the Javelin. But then someone thought they could turn a penny by foisting it on to a bunch of Third Worlders who they believed wouldn't have known the difference anyway. They would have too, had Yousaf not had say in the matter.

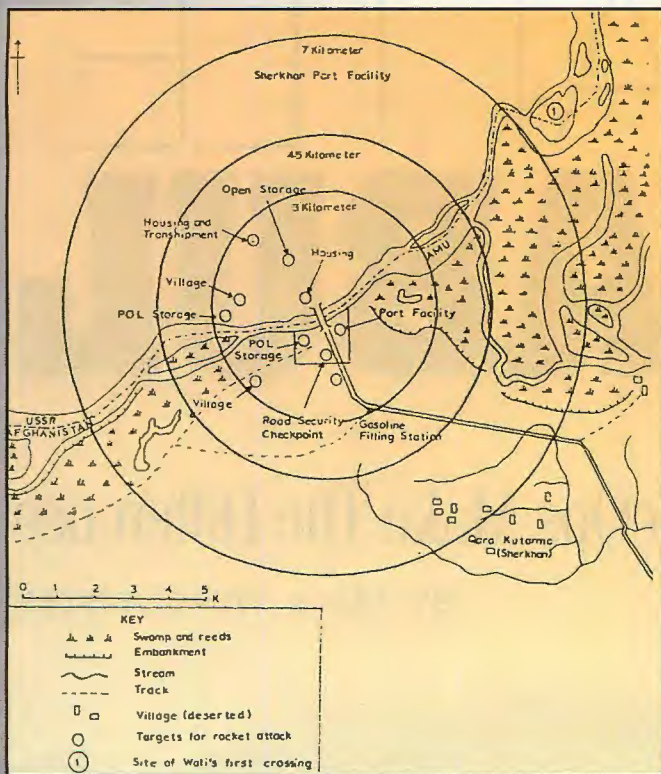
He was helped, too, fortunately, when a British team — at the behest of Langley — arrived in Pakistan to demonstrate the weapon. The tests were a joke and the Blowpipe issue disappeared off the table, though it dragged on for months. Yousaf refers to the episode as a fiasco.

There is no doubt that difficulties imposed by some Americans went quite a way towards causing this resolute Brigadier General to take early retirement in 1988.

Whatever else emerges from the book, this is one officer who was able to peek long and hard behind the scenes of our formidable Western defense establishments. While he is unequivocal about being grateful that America eventually helped turn the war against the Soviet Bear, he was never impressed with the way the Yanks went about their duties.

Being an officer and gentleman, he is discreet enough not to say it, but the message is clear: In the Mujahideen war against the Soviets, the CIA in performing its duties was both callous and obstructionist. They rode roughshod over people, establishments, traditional sentiment as well as several ancient cultures that were already well-established when the forefathers of the perpetrators — clad in skins — were living in caves.

Hardly ever did these operators — experienced or not — consider any option but their own. Someone at the time said something about it being the Ugly American syndrome.



Logistics were mind boggling. The attack on Bagram, where the village of Koh-i-Safi was chosen as a kick-off point, needed a five-week wait while runners were dispatched to haul men from that specific mujahideen location back to Peshawar.

Al Venter is a frequent contributor to SOF. *Afghanistan The Bear Trap: The Defeat of a Superpower* is published by Casemate, 2114 Darby Road, Havertown, PA 19083. ✕



THE BATTLE FOR KABUL

Part 2

SpecOps Make The Difference

BY MIKE WINCHESTER



Slowly the realization sank in: The enemy was in full retreat and there simply was no second line. That translated into a head-long advance as jeeps, pick-up and trucks began overtaking the armor and pushing on faster to Qarabagh. We arrived amid the ruins as darkness was falling around 1730. The enemy had gone but the road was jammed with vehicles and exuberant troops milling about, embracing and slapping one another on the back. The village, went the word, would be secured that night and the advance towards Kabul would resume in the morning.

News from the east was also good: At Bagram and its sprawling airbase the advance had also broken through the front-lines by 1400-1500 hours in the face of initially fierce resistance. By dusk, troops of 515 Brigade had pushed 5 kilometers south along the so-called New Road towards a low pass that gave onto a wide expanse of open desert country north of Kabul. Before halting, General Baba Jan himself had been wounded when an aide stepped on a landmine — cause of most UF casualties that day. But the overall toll was surprisingly low: just 10 KIA and some 80 WIA.

Having linked up again with my own jeep, I stayed that night in back in Charikar on the floor in a draughty office

(far left) For the Afghan campaign, U.S. special operators — Delta, SEALs, and Special Forces — were authorized to use their own discretion regarding clothing in order to appear less conspicuous and minimize the possibility of irritating the local ragheads. According to one SF'er, "For the most part, the team sergeants gave the team members guidance regarding what would be appropriate to wear." Same was true of web gear. Note AK magazine web gear on trooper at right. Whatever works. (above) Armored unit of Guards Bde. waits for offensive to kick-in near Kabul.

block that had become the BBC's main base of operations. There was news of a jet liner going down in Queens, New York. But mostly the conversation over a late meal focused on the defense the Talibs would now put up at the gates of Kabul having had the chance to regroup.

But what none of us knew until early Tuesday was the amazing situation then unfolding between Qarabagh and Kabul and within the city itself. The swift collapse of the frontline appeared to have triggered panic and confusion both among retreating troops and, more importantly, in the Taliban command in Kabul — insofar as there still was one.

Three days later in a hospital in the city SOF interviewed a young Pakistani volunteer wounded and captured later on



AFP/Benares Khan

Tuesday. For the record at least Jawad Hussein, a 21-year-old from Mardan in Pakistan, claimed he was just visiting Kabul for a two-day look-see and had just happened to be at Bagram as part of his brief investigation when the offensive began. Suffice to say, there were a lot of other Pakistan and Arab tourists at the front that day as well.

According to Hussein, the flight back from the lines began mid-afternoon and continued throughout the night. "It was chaos," he told me sitting cross-legged on a hospital bed. "Everybody was running to save his own skin. A lot of people grabbed pick-up trucks; the rest ran back from the lines on foot." Hussein and some other Pakistanis put in a 14-hour hike back to the city before being captured on the outskirts.

Inside the city the virus of panic was also spreading as news of the breakthrough filtered back. Sometime between 1900 and 2030 hours, beginnings of a mass Taliban exodus from the city were under way though whether this was the result of a specific order or simply a panicked flight spilling over from the frontline is far from clear. *SOF's* own assessment is that there was a near complete break-down in communications between the command in Kabul and different units at the front — Afghan, Arab (al-Qaida) and Pakistani — resulting in total confusion and a general stampede for the exit.

"Around 9 p.m. from the roof of my house I could hear Taliban soldiers talking on the radio saying that Qarabagh and Kalakan had fallen," recalled Wakil Mir Agha, a 56-year old headman from a suburb near Kabul International Airport I talked to next morning. "That was when the first batch left the area. There was another group — mostly Pakistanis from Punjab who had returned from the New Road front — that pulled out at 2 a.m., some on foot, some

(above) These young professionals, because of the changing nature of war and the specific requirements of this conflict, have proved conclusively that the time and money spent on Special Operations has been more than justified. We're looking forward to the after-action reports by the operators as they become available. (left) Armor and mobile units move across front line on the old road into Taliban territory.

in motor vehicles. It was panic."

According to UF estimates, the retreat from Kabul involved a total of over 8,000 troops of the Taliban and their allies, along with hundreds of officials, families and assorted camp-followers. They fled in cars, pick-ups, trucks, armored vehicles — whatever was available or could be hijacked. According to one estimate some 800 vehicles were stolen from aid agencies and private homes during the night.

For the thousands of foreign fighters camped out in offices and barracks across the city or returning from the front the search for transport was especially vital. Unlike Afghan Talibs, they stood no chance of melting back into the countryside. Mohammad Yama Sharifi, manager of the Emergency Hospital had his home in the nearby Wazir Akbar Khan quarter broken into twice during the night by foreigners seeking to commandeer his car already immobilized by a U.S. rocket strike on a Taliban mini-bus parked outside the house.

Around 1900 two Arabs arrived but left on seeing the vehicle was going nowhere. The second break-in came after midnight. "I was expecting maybe American soldiers coming into town but I was amazed to hear people speaking Russian." His visitors turned out to be four heavily armed



Chechens who in a pidgin mix of Arabic, Farsi and Pashto demanded the keys to his car. They too, left disappointed.

Bankrobbers

Other armed groups were looking for more than just vehicles. As sporadic outbursts of gunfire crackled across the city, one group hit the main money exchange at the Serai-e-Shahzadah near the Kabul River; another the Central Bank on Pashtunistan Square and left with stacks of the local currency, the afghani. Private homes were also robbed. "Some of these people said they were Taliban," noted Yama Sharifi. "But in reality they were just local criminals using the Taliban's name to cash in on the chaos." Others, though, appear to have been real Taliban troops stocking up on cash for hard times to come.

Airstrikes by low-flying American helicopter gunships hovering over the darkened city only fueled the fear and chaos. "The sky seemed full of helicopter gunships," Gino Strada, Italian director of the Milan-based charity Emergency later told me. Having reopened his Kabul hospital in central Kabul just two days earlier, Strada, along with his local and expat staff, was hunkered down in the empty children's ward. "All night there were non-stop rockets, some very close," he recalled. "But our real worry was being taken hostage by Arab fighters. Kabul was packed with Arabs — packed. And these people were nuts."

Close to 2100 one Taliban car was hit by rocket fire near



AFP/John MacDougall

NA troops during operation leading to surrender of Taliban forces near Maidanshahr, southwest of Kabul. (inset) SF troopers, like this one pictured here, wreaked havoc on the Taliban irregulars, calling in pinpoint air strikes as they "painted" targets with laser designators. No doubt their mufti attire has caused a number of strokes amongst the "Colonel Blimps" in the Pentagon — Or at least we hope so.

the hospital killing three or four along with some civilians in a nearby house. Around 2130 a rocket from another chopper scored a direct hit on a pick-up truck loaded with Arab fighters at an intersection in the Shahr-e-Nao quarter of central Kabul. The explosion flipped the flaming vehicle upside down, killing eight.

Meanwhile back up the road at Charikar, I got maybe four hours sleep, disturbed by shouts and banging doors. By 0415 I was up again drinking evil-tasting lukewarm coffee with John Jennings, a former USMC officer and old Afghan hand with a fluent command of Persian. Jennings had spent much of the late '80s and early '90s covering the Afghan war as a journalist before returning to the States to train and work as a physician's assistant in the urban war zones of the Bronx. He was back in Afghanistan "on holiday."

Coffee was rudely interpreted by a burly a UF officer who came yelling for us to get moving and now: The city was about to fall. Minutes later we were staggering out into a still-

frozen night and were soon back in the jeep lurching through the darkness back across yesterday's frontlines. In what was turning into a race for the city, we struggled to stay in convoy with three other jeeps.

We weren't alone for long. By the time we'd passed through Qarabagh and were moving on to Kalakan, the next major village, we were overtaking troop trucks and armor. As the sky paled before 0600 we were leading a triumphal convoy of jeeps, trucks and tanks, piled high with troops and often two-abreast. The vehicles lurched south past highway security details. Knots of soldiers hunched around roadside fires in the half-light of dawn. Finally we'd reached the long curving ascent up the Khairkhanah Pass that leads across low, barren hills and down into Kabul city. Bodies of five Talibs cut down in mid-flight just minutes earlier lay sprawled across the road to greet us.

There was no resistance to speak of but troops were now debussing and fanning out across the hillside to secure the crest above the road. One group found a Talib suspect, an unarmed, still beardless youth who was dragged roughly out of a small hut onto open ground. He was doubled over as blows and kicks rained down on him amid yells of anger. His life was saved by the intervention of Jennings and a BBC journalist who yelled at his attackers to back-off. As the soldiers turned away and the advance swept on, the youth was simply left lying on the ground, apparently with no serious wounds but paralyzed with fear and shock and staring glazedly into the dawn sky.

Around 0630 we reached the top of the Khairkhanah pass and halted, part of a UF vanguard of jeeps, trucks and armored vehicles commanded by Gul Haidar, a Panjshiri general who had joined Ahmadshah Massoud in the early 1980s. Before long a large crowd of vehicles, troops and foreign journalists was backing up, all anxious to move into the city. Their way was checked, however, by two BMP armored personnel carriers which had swung across the highway to form an impromptu roadblock.

Power Vacuum

This exercise was an attempt to put muscle into a promise made earlier by the UF that, when Kabul fell, the city's security would be turned over to a specially trained police force rather than combat units from the army. For weeks Washington and Western governments had been spooked by

the mirage of a re-run of the mujahideen infighting that followed the fall of the communist regime in 1992. The fear was that factional infighting would follow immediately if the UF seized Kabul and the citizens of the city waited in fear and trepidation. This alarmist nonsense was fanned by a generally uninformed Western press corps, most of whom knew little or nothing about the war in Kabul between 1992-96 and what lay behind it. It goes almost without saying that there were no factions in the UF army that took Kabul and the citizenry greeted the UF as liberating heroes.

The ban on military units entering Kabul remained in place until mid-morning when it was simply overtaken by events and the need to fill a dangerous security vacuum in the city. But at 0830 UF Kabul commander Bismillah Khan was still trying to enforce it. Standing in a crowd at the head of a now lengthy jam of vehicles and troops, the beefy young general was yelling furiously at those trying to move forward and occasionally reinforced his anger with a well-placed punch. By this time, however, both city taxis and civilian pedestrians were moving up the hill from the city side with confirmation of a city abandoned by its former rulers. Inevitably, before 0900 impatient Western journalists were simply walking around the roadblock and



courtesy Mike Winchester

SOF correspondent Mike Winchester, who has covered Afghanistan for 15 years, was one of the first journalists into Afghanistan after 9-11. Here he has just joined up with a Northern Alliance unit near Maidanshar.

taking taxis into town.

SOF drove into the city through Taimani district on the back of a pick-up with three other journalists. The streets were thronged with jubilant crowds, waving and cheering "Zendabad! Zendabad!" (Long Life!) as they saw foreigners. Some cried "Ahmadshah Massoud zendabad!" Our vehicle overtook family cars apparently out for joy-rides whose occupants waved. From the back of one a pretty teen-aged girl, her chadori thrown off, laughed and waved. Across the urban skyline kites, once banned under the Taliban as frivolous, were flying in celebration. Euphoria mixed with relief. "It feels like we've all been released from prison," was how one man in the crowd put it, "that the whole of Afghanistan's been released from prison."

I knew Kabul well enough from months in the city during the fighting of 1992-1996 and directed the driver to central Shahr-i-Nao (New Town) district. It turned out to be a good choice. As we moved beyond the outer suburbs the crowds thinned and the mood of the street changed — there was an uncertainty in the air. Sure enough, as we swung into an intersection near Shahr-i-

Nao Park, bursts of automatic fire could be heard. Sharp, focused and repeated; no celebration but a firefight.

Sprinting towards the park, we were just in time for the end-game. Amid the trees, scattered groups of citizens, some armed, were closing in moving in on a group of six foreign fighters who were going down hard. As I pieced it together later, three Arabs and three Pakistanis had emerged from a nearby al-Qaida office an hour or so after dawn apparently unaware their comrades-in-jihad had all taken off in the night. Bad mistake.

They didn't take long to wake up to the new situation: Before long a running firefight had broken out with the six finally taking up positions in the park for a last stand. Three men were finally wounded in concrete water channels where they'd taken cover. Another two, also bleeding, lay sprawled a few yards away.

As we approached, the mob finally closed in for the kill. Amid frenzied cries of "Marg ba Pakistan (Death to Pakistan)!" and "Marg ba Musharraf!" some men jumped down into the channel to kick the three wounded fighters. Others cleared a channel through the tight throng and pulled me forward to watch as a civilian, his face contorted with hatred and rage, fired short bursts from a Kalashnikov rifle into the still heaving chests of the wounded. Surrounded by a pack of cheering onlookers, another man with a knife gouged out the eyes of the third foreigner as he lay mortally wounded. There are certainly better ways to go and meet your Maker.

Civilian Mobs

It was the same story across Kabul as foreign stragglers were hunted down by angry mobs. On the avenue to the airport we found the bodies of two Arabs dumped on wasteland between apartment blocks. It turned out they'd been cornered by locals in a nearby alleyway around 0800 and burst into a small mud-walled house. The womenfolk and children had managed to escape as the Arabs barricaded themselves into the tiny kitchen and fought off armed locals for an hour before finally crying out the *shahada*, the Muslim creed ("there is no god but God and Mohammad is his Prophet") and killing themselves with their own hand-grenades. In the days to come suicide by grenade was to become to preferred exit strategy for scores, maybe hundreds, of cornered Arabs.

But the evaporation of Taliban control had opened a yawning

power vacuum. In some districts local armed groups moved in at first light to impose a rough security. Around the airport, a group of local men under Wakil Mir Agha, the old local headman who'd watched from the roof of his house all night, moved at 0400 to secure the area in what he later described as a "local rising." On one major intersection on the avenue towards the airport, furniture was piled up where local groups armed with previously hidden rifles had confiscated booty being taken away from offices by civilians.

In central Pashtunistan Square, crowds of men and boys, some armed with firearms and even swords, milled about outside the National Bank and Presidential Palace complex.



Mike Winchester

Following hard on the sweeping collapse of Taliban power in the north, the defeat outside Kabul all but ruled out any possibility of a reversion to organized guerrilla warfare in the movement's southern heartland.

Around 1000 a confrontation was narrowly averted as a group wielding automatic rifles and a rocket-propelled grenade launcher at the gates of the already looted bank argued furiously with others trying to move into the building. As shouts grew angrier and jostling began, rifles and the RPG were leveled and bystanders sprinted for cover. "The sooner troops get in here and take control the better," said Mohammad Rafi, a 23-year-old mechanic, as he watched the stand-off slowly defused. "We've had 23 years of war, people are desperately poor and a lot of guns have been unearthed or taken from Taliban posts. Looting and fighting is going to spread."

By 1100, however, any intention the United Front might have had not to move troops into the city had been overtaken by events. While armored units initially remained on the edges of Kabul, armed police in distinctive charcoal gray uniforms and soldiers of the Guards Brigade in dark mottled-green camouflage fatigues began taking up positions at key intersections across the city. According to one senior police source, by afternoon some 2,000 police had moved into Kabul backed by army units.

The fall of Kabul effectively sealed the fate of both the Taliban and their al-Qaida allies, at least in Afghanistan. Following hard on the sweeping collapse of Taliban power in the north, the defeat outside Kabul all but ruled out any possibility of a reversion to organized guerrilla warfare in the movement's southern heartland. But what lay behind the dramatic speed of the Taliban and al-Qaida rout that began south of Mazar-i-Sharif on 4-5 November and culminated in the fall of Kabul on 13 November?

Continued on page 67



WE WERE SOLDIERS

The Bones Of Our Brothers

BY JIM MORRIS

PHOTOS BY STEPHEN VAUGHAN/PARAMOUNT PICTURES

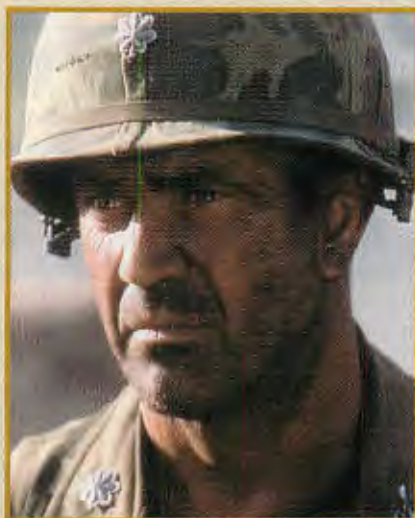
Mir Bahmanyar, my ex-Ranger companion, and I were driving in his Subaru on the Ft. Hunter-Liggett, Calif., reservation, looking for the set of *We Were Soldiers Once ... And Young*. It's a beautiful post, but it's high desert. It doesn't look anything like South Vietnam, and it's way too dry to be in the Central Highlands. I imagined convoys of trucks coming down this road with a jungle of trees on their beds, to fill in the gaps. Turns out I was right.

Then I get another mental image of flights of civilian C-130 cargo planes, the kind rigged to drop flame retardant on forest fires, dumping huge loads of green paint on the hills.

Movie directors do lots crazier stuff than that to get the image they want onscreen.

Off to the right the air is filled with an old familiar *whop-whop-whop*. Overhead is a column of UH1D helicopters with U.S. Army markings, the green legs of troopers dangling from each door. As we drive on farther there is a little smoke rising from the trees on the other side of the road.

I've got a flutter in my gut, the flutter of dread. I



"Ya know," I said, "on the set the other day I saw this guy, wasn't even facing me. And yet somehow he drew my eye. He drew everybody's eye. It was Gibson. A critic once described Richard Burton as having 'heroic presence' on stage. Gibson has that." — Author Jim Morris.

haven't seen the script yet. Is this flick going to be another slander on the reputation of the G.I.s in Vietnam? If it's faithful to retired Lieutenant General Hal Moore and Joe Galloway's great book about the battle in the Ia Drang Valley it won't be, but Hollywood bends things to suit itself.

There's a parking lot ahead, with a lot of cars and a vast number of the big beige trucks that haul the gazillion items; costumes, props, lights, camera equipment, trailers for the stars, scaffolding, and yet more and more stuff, lined up in two lines, forming an "L" with the open side toward us.

Mir is a veteran of the 2d Bn 75th Rangers in the '80s. He's now a budding producer in Hollywood. We're going to try to find somebody he knows to get on the set. This is a black bag job for me. No reporters are allowed out here now, at least not if the publicity department has its way. But I want to see it without the dog and pony show.

We check the prop truck. There are guns and gear on racks up in the truck bed, and a pile of dead G.I.s under the steps. No, they're manikins in uniform with red splotches on them. Mir's property master buddy is out on the set.

There is a constant stream of vehicles going between the



ONCE ... AND YOUNG

production office and the set, small go-carts hauling electrical equipment, vans hauling cast and crew. We hitch a ride on one of the go-carts. It crosses a pretty little stream that doubles for the Ia Drang in the movie. We go a mile or so up the road.

No shooting going on. Six hueys sit in the middle of a huge open field. Of all the high desert mountains around us

only the one in the background is green. Later I find that they didn't paint it; they watered it.

They're shooting in the States to finish fast. Except for the threatened actor's strike they'd film this very expensive flick in Thailand or the Philippines. Shooting in California jacks the budget up, since the entire cast and





crew are making American union wages.

"This makes watching paint dry seem like Mardi Gras," I say. "Let's go get some lunch."

We grab a ride in one of the crew vans. It is driven by an attractive young woman. Mir, who was raised with good manners, gives me the front seat, next to the driver, markedly improving the view on the ride back.

Arriving at the mess hall I experience one of those *déjà vu* moments that pervade the sets of Vietnam movies. The scene looks so normal. There are a bunch of troopers lounging around outside the big white mess hall tent, about a company of them.

The disjuncture is that their uniforms are 1965 fatigues with white nametags and gold U.S. ARMY on black tape over their left pockets, big black and yellow

Cav patches on their left shoulders. But the radio in the van is playing Dave Matthews' "Crash." For just a second I'm in two places in time.

All I could think of when I saw those patches was "target," and I marveled that anyone had ever worn such a conspicuous uniform in combat. Especially me.

But then a myriad of small details brought me into present time. Any NCO, and there were dozens of guys with chevrons on their sleeves in that mob, would be screaming, making these guys button their jackets and tuck them in. One guy was wearing a John Deere baseball cap backwards. Sam Elliott, costumed as Basil Plumley, Sergeant Major of 1/7 Cav walked right past this clown. The real Sgt. Maj. Plumley would have been on that kid like a duck on a June bug.

These guys weren't in uniform. They were in costume.



There was no unit cohesion. They were actors and extras. This is a revelation that hits you over and over again on these sets.

After lunch Mir and I went back to the set. Same choppers in an open field. Same people wondering around for indeterminate purposes. One of them was a handsome dark-complexioned guy uniformed as a captain, wearing a Special Forces combat patch. "Oh," I said, laughing, "this isn't your first tour." He turned to face me, smiling. His nametag read "NADAL." He was Jsu Garcia, playing Captain Tony Nadal, commander of Alpha Company. "Yes, sir," he said.

The costumer had put the SF patch 1/8 of an inch too low, but I held my tongue, and chatted with him for a couple of minutes. I asked if he had read the book. "Yes, sir, twice. And everything about Tony Nadal more than that." He was determined to get the guy right, and do him proud.





A four-door pick up drove up and a guy in uniform got out of the right side. For whatever reason he caught my eye. He wasn't facing me, just standing alone, looking over the set. Even facing the other way, feet spread, shoulders back, he radiated total confidence. He wheeled and started walking through the gap in the potted trees between the parking lot and the set proper. His walk was cocky. This guy radiated from every pore that he was the big kahuna. Let's see; silver leaf, nametag "MOORE." It was Mel Gibson. The only other man I ever saw dominate an area like that was Colonel Woody Garrett, then commander of the 1st Special Forces Group. I had to meet this guy.



I Had To Walk Away

A couple of days later I was talking on the phone to Joe Galloway, who had been the only correspondent at LZ X-ray during the battle. Before that he manned an M60 for Charlie Beckwith at the siege of Plei Me (Beckwith said he could have been a great machine gunner) and carried both a camera and a rifle in the Ia Drang. We had never met, but

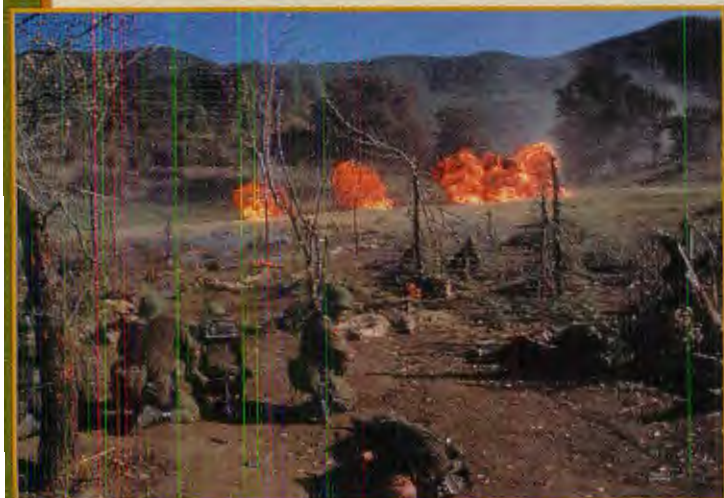
talked on the phone a couple of times. I told him how impressed I was with the spirit on the set, how everybody on this film seemed dedicated to doing honor to the young men who died in the first great battle of the Vietnam War.

"Well," he said, "six years ago Randall Wallace read the book on an airplane, and he saw where I said Hollywood got it wrong every time." The exact quote was, 'Hollywood got it wrong every damn time, whetting twisted political knives on the bones of our dead brothers.' "He took that as a challenge."

"I couldn't believe the script," I said, having read it by now. "I cried through half of it, just sobbed."

What got me most was that 1/7 Cav went over as a unit, had trained together as a unit, and their wives were neighbors at Ft. Benning. In the script Hal Moore's wife, Julie, and Lieutenant Jack Geohagen's wife, Barbara, were going around delivering telegrams from the Department of the Army to the wives of the dead while the battle was still on. Then Julie had to deliver Jack's letter to Barbara.

"I know what you mean," said Joe. I knew this kid at X-Ray, Jimmy Nakayama. I watched him die. On the set they took me to the kid who was playing him. He was in a chair, being made up for his death scene. He was made up to be mortally wounded. He put out his hand to shake mine, and I couldn't take it. I just had to walk away."





He Has It In Spades

A group of Asians costumed as NVA came walking up the road, and for a millisecond my guts seized and my hand grabbed for an M16 that hadn't been there for years. I relaxed and asked them if they knew where Joe Galloway was.

One of them said Joe was on the set. I entered a break in the temporary forest and wandered into a clearing filled with guys costumed as either fighting troopers or casualties, perfectly healthy guys with blood and bandages all over them, standing around shooting the breeze.

I walked up to a couple of guys, one in shorts and on crutches, and another in uniform.

"S'cuse me," I said. "I'm looking for Joe Galloway."

Then I recognized them. I'd heard that Randall Wallace, the writer-director, had been injured in a pick-up soccer game. He was the one on crutches. The other guy was Mel Gibson. Gibson jerked his thumb to the rear. "He's over by the doughnut stand," he said.

I thanked them and headed that way. There was no doughnut stand, but there was a small tent with a video monitor inside, a fairly common set up from which the director can view the shoot in frame.

Joe was standing there talking to some of the crew. He was a big guy, 60, give or take a year, easy to spot as some-

one who has seen way too much combat.

We had talked like old friends over the phone, but in fact had never met before. We shook hands.

"Ya know," I said, "on the set the other day I saw this guy, wasn't even facing me. And yet somehow he drew my eye. He drew everybody's eye. It was Gibson. A critic once described Richard Burton as having 'heroic presence' on stage. Gibson has that. I'm thinking it's the same thing the army calls 'command presence.' Hal Moore and Mel Gibson don't look very much alike, but I was wondering if General Moore has that command presence?"

Galloway grinned, "Yeah, he has it in spades."

Broken Arrow

I was in a time machine to 1965. Sam Elliott looked that much like a sergeant major. It was like he was born to the role. Maybe he missed his calling. But he was open and approachable, a good guy to talk to.

"I was just talking to Joe ..." I told him my whole rap about Richard Burton and heroic presence, and Gibson had it, but did Moore?

"Yeah," he said, in that low, slow, slightly nasal cowboy voice, "in spades." No kidding, he used exactly the same phrase Galloway had.

We chatted for awhile about other movies of his I'd liked, *Rough Riders* and the *Big Lebowski*. Then back to the film at hand.

"Did you spend some time with Plumley?"

"Yeah, quite a bit, with him and his family. He's about 81 now, and he's had some health problems. But his mind is still sharp. He's still the same guy."

After awhile Joe led me back to the TV monitor booth. Wallace was in there with Gibson, watching tapes of the rehearsal of a key scene. A little tinny voice was screaming "Broken Arrow! I say again, Broken Arrow! I can't mark our lines. We don't have any lines. Charlie Company's overrun. They're all mixed in among us!" It was Josh Dougherty,

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OPENING THE SECOND FRONT ON TERROR

War Games With Live Targets In The Philippines

BY FRANK HOPKINS



Philippine GIs in chopper give air cover to troops on ground pursuing Abu Sayyaf terrorists through jungle of Basilan Island last October.

There have flashed across the radar screen of civilization some true renegades, swaggering punks who kidnap innocent hostages and rape them, behead them (and then attempt to sell the video tape to CNN), or barter them for millions in ransom, as suits their bent-headed service to "Allah." Judging another man's relationship to his

Creator is risky journalism, but we feel safe in saying that should the planet be so fortunate that this renegade scum be martyred, their souls would not be claimed by the Allah of Mohammed. Apologists for this renegade band of terrorists are hard to find, even among the traditional Muslim separatists in the southern Philippines, perhaps due in part to their threatening the murder

of Islamic cleric Ustaz Sakih, who came to them to negotiate the release of hostages, and for the public relations damage they have caused the Muslim community in its quest for an autonomous southern region in the Philippines.

Manila journalist Rasheed Abou-Alsamh declared, "I don't think any Filipino Muslim will disagree with me that the Abu Sayyaf need to be stopped with force. What they are doing is a disgrace and they are sullyng the image and the name of Islam around the world. Nobody says they shouldn't fight for their rights, but kidnapping foreigners and then turning them into cash cows, just confirms that they are a bunch of impoverished criminals ... In short, they are mere mercenaries, goons for hire who are not fighting for any ideology whatsoever."

Philippine President Arroyo has described the group as "a money-crazed gang of criminals" without any ideology. They have done little in real terms to advance their purported goal of an independent Muslim State.

And now they are in turn an international target, as hundreds of U.S. troops including some 160 Army Special Forces training cadre are now in or on the way to the Philippine archipelago to assist a beleaguered ally with training, logistics, and transport in their mission of bringing the Abu Sayyaf reign of terror to an end.

Wanton and ruthless even by standards of the radical Muslim separatists of the MILF (Moro Independence Liberation Front) from which they sprang in 1991, "Abu Sabaya" (true

name Aldam Titao) has emerged as the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) faction leader to be dealt with. The ASG broke away from the MILF in 1991, under the leadership of Abduarajak Abubakar Janjalani, an Afghan *jihād* alumnus who maintained close ties with other radical Islamic leaders. Janjalani was killed in a firefight with Philippine police in the village of Lamitan on Basilan Island, in December of 1998, leaving a leadership vacuum that led to a power struggle eventually won by Janjalani's brother, Khadafy Janjalani.

Although the ASG is believed to have received considerable support from the onset via the largess of such donors as Osama bin Laden, Khadafy Janjalani has been somewhat upstaged in the last two years by the dramatic successes of Abu Sabaya's multi-million-dollar ransom enterprises with Janjalani and Sabaya reportedly now sharing leadership of one faction. Another faction is led by "Commander Robot" who has raped European hostages.

Whereas before the ASG eked out a living with robbery, piracy, ransom kidnapping of local businessmen and growing a little dope, the enterprising, if evil, Abu Sabaya went after the rich and valuable, quite accurately reasoning that they would be worth more in the marketplace. And he has made crime pay very well indeed, by reinvesting his millions of ill-gotten gains in the fastest boats, the best weapons, the best high-tech commo gear — and, according to many Philippine sources, generous bribes in all the best places.

Nearly 10,000 Philippine military personnel have been dedicated to the capture/neutralization of this virulent threat — according to Philippine press reports some 8,000 pursuing his forces in the mountainous jungle of Basilan alone. And it is no easy task: With their coffers swelled by millions collected in ransoms and the luxury of going high-tech, the enemy is often better equipped than Philippine forces. Philippine naval forces found themselves simply outrun by the thousand-horsepower speedboat the ASG used in recent kidnappings, which had been purchased with ransom money paid by Libyan strongman Muamar Gaddafi. And with apparent wealth came a new influx of recruits, as nothing succeeds like success, especially in a criminal enterprise.

The convergence of these factors saw the ranks of the ASG swell to some 4,000 fighters at its peak in 2000. According to Philippine military offi-



Agence France Presse

Philippine troop shoulders GPMG on way to front in mountainous Basilan Island, stronghold of ASG terrorists.

cial, however, that number of active fighters has since dwindled to between 800 and 1,000, mostly located on the island of Jolo, and thought now to be hiding in jungle caves with their remaining few hostages. What gives U.S. authorities pause is the synergism when such maniacal groups get together with others of generally like mind, and are able to coordinate terrorism — well-funded, high-tech terrorism — on a global basis. And what gives America a particular interest are well-known ASG types with other Islamic terrorists — and the events of 11 September 2001.

Several individuals loyal to al-Qaeda

and linked to terrorist plots against the United States have lived and trained in the Philippines: Mohammed Sadeek Odah, convicted for his role in the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, studied engineering in Manila before joining al-Qaeda; Ramzi Yousef, convicted mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, has been officially identified as leader of an al-Qaeda cell, and hatched a plot while studying in Manila to blow up a dozen U.S. airliners over the Pacific. U.S. officials say terrorist acts al-Qaeda planned in the Philippines include a 1994 plot to kill visiting Pope John Paul, and a

1995 plot to assassinate President Clinton on a trip to Manila.

As we go to press, Philippine authorities have arrested three men in General Santos City with a cache of more than a ton of TNT, 300 detonators and 17 M16 rifles. The men were associated with Jemaah Islamiyah, a group with cells in Indonesia and Malaysia. Some 13 of the group were arrested in Singapore in a plot to blow up U.S. and other foreign interests there. Singapore police said eight of the 13 had received al-Qaeda training in Afghanistan.

Swaggering Bravadaccio – With Some Reason

Last 7 October, in a radio interview a defiant Abu Sabaya said, “We are not afraid of them. Come and get us ... We have long wanted to fight the U.S. If they want the problem of the Philippines to worsen, let them come here. We are not afraid of them. It is to our advantage the U.S. is giving supplies — those high-tech equipment to the [Philippine] military — because we are being supplied by the U.S., too,” he said. “We are getting those [supplies], those night-vision that they have ... all of the supplies given by the U.S., we get a part of them, too.”

“Tell them to increase their supplies so we can get a share,” Sabaya told the interviewer.

If this be true, and observers think it probably is, one must also acknowledge that to terrorists with millions in hard cash, the world is their arms bazaar, and the ASG has embraced high-tech with open arms and wallets. They have made major investments not only in state-of-the-art weapons and speedboats, but in sophisticated communications equipment as well, enabling them to call any place on earth without being traced — and with a much clearer signal than one is likely to get on a Globe cell in Manila, notes columnist “Raoul” in *Asia Pacific Management News*. “Not only do the bandits have the Philippine military outgunned, they’ve got ‘em out-teched as well,” he observed.

A succinct observer of the Philippine scene, “Raoul” also noted the ASG is heavily into the use of PCs and e-mail for communications, and that even the most remote villages in Mindanao have Internet cafes and the latest Bill Gates equipment. No only that, he said, “some of the secret (individually negotiated, possibly by text) ransoms have been paid electronically.”

A Little Help From Their Enemies?

The ASG’s lavish use of loose cash to get their job done has been assumed, widely reported and, in some cases, documented. On occasion when government troops were closing in on them, they reportedly would fire bundles of 100- and 500-peso notes into the air, to float down through the foliage on abysmally paid Philippine forces who “dropped their guns, scooped up the welcome cash, and waved the bandits off ...”

It was unclear at the time why the government of then-President [now in custody on corruption charges], Joseph Estrada, approved a megabucks Libyan payment to secure the release of hostages, knowing it would make Abu Sayyaf stronger than ever. Some suggested that officials involved in the decision shared in the proceeds. Reports will not die that former President Estrada was a major beneficiary of the estimated \$20-million ransom provided by Muamar Khadafy — that his chief government negotiator, Robert Aventajado, who negotiated with the ASG got \$2 million and Estrada got \$8 million or 40%. Some such reports are quite specific and credible: German news magazine *Der Spiegel* quoted confidential sources within the German secret police, who tapped satellite comms between the government and the kidnappers. Aventajado threatened suit and stated the release obviously was timed to influence then-President Estrada’s upcoming corruption trial.

Interestingly, *Der Spiegel* itself had paid a ransom to ASG for the return of its reporter the preceding July.

Some cite the military precision with which these kidnaps for ransom have been planned and executed as proof that there must be trained military minds behind it all. Obviously there are, if you count service in al-Qaeda as military experience.

The Philippine Senate, represented by Sen. Ramon Magsaysay, held hearings on Basilan regarding possible bribery being involved in the escape of ASG kidnappers at the Jose Torres Memorial Hospital, in Lamitan. Dr. Daniel Cawli told senators his staff saw a brigadier general accept a briefcase of cash from an unidentified person shortly before the hostage-takers escaped from the surrounded hospital. Fr. Cirilo Nacorda, a local priest, who also had charged the military let the kidnappers escape and earlier had named several individuals responsible, did not testify. One of the accused officers characterized the accusations as “too much!”

Although the hyperbole of faction leader Abu Sabaya can usually be dismissed for what it is, it is hard to regard all the U.S. military high-tech gear in the hands of the ASG as being simply the spoils of war, in light of their less-than-stellar track record when engaging the Philippine military *mano a mano*. Although the Armed Forces of the Philippines are a very good and loyal force considering their pay and benefits, corruption is not unheard of at any level of Philippines society.



Philippine Army Rangers search for Abu Sayyaf terrorists this January on Basilan Island, while U.S. advisors are setting up training base.

No Honor Among Thieves

One element that may play into the hands of authorities, aside from the lack of a broad-based popular support for the ASG among separatist Muslims, is the factional fighting among ASG elements themselves. Their divisions transcend a mere lack of unity, with one major element headed by "Commander Robot" (Ghalib Andang) and Mujib Susukan, and the other by Khadafy Janjalani and Abu Sabaya (Aldam Titao), pioneer of the high-stakes ransom gambit. Yet another faction is led by "Commander Global," less prosaically known to his mamma as Nadjimi Sabdula. The several factions in the Sulu Islands have their own warlords, followers, territories and special interests, and have often squabbled.

The Philippine government has put a price of \$2 million each on the heads of the ASG leaders, and who is to say it might not pay off? The dramatic rescue of four Western hostages from the jungles of Jolo by retired Col. Ernesto Pacuno, nicknamed "Dragon," and his associate, another officer called "Dragonito," serves to illustrate: In the company of Abu Sayyaf members to ensure safe passage to where the hostages were held — and carrying some \$4 million in Muamar Khadafy's cash — the group was ambushed by a rival Abu Sayyaf factions and two people were killed. Luckily, Dragon had changed his vehicle at the last minute, and he escaped with the ransom.

Within days the released hostages were being paraded at the Tripoli home of Muamar Khadafy in Libya as proof of his wholesome demeanor and right to be a player on the world stage (i.e. Europe, buy my oil). According to German sources, the Libyans had been enlisted to help through the kind offices of former Chancellor Helmut Kohl's secret service coordinator Bernd Schmidtbauer, as there were three German nationals among the hostages. Safely in Tripoli, Risto Vahanen, of Finland, admitted to a TV reporter that the female hostages had been raped by "Robot" (Ghalib Andang) — especially ironic since these warriors for Allah had earlier beheaded an American hostage for "infidelity," because they kidnapped him in the company of a woman not his wife.

The same day the ransomed hostages were on display in Libya, ASG kidnapped three more hostages from another Malayan resort and beat feet in a fast boat they had bought with 1.25

REQUIREMENT FOR A HEAVYWEIGHT

If you are perceived worth a ransom, you are at risk in the Philippines, where kidnapping for ransom, once a cottage industry, is now a growth industry the likes of which is seldom seen outside Bogota.

Kidnappers still mostly target *Tsinoy* businessmen or executives of Taiwanese or Singapore companies, but the smaller freebooters will often take what (whom) they can get. Traditionally, Chinese businessmen affluent enough to be targets are surrounded by a bevy of heavies, which vary from gentlemen from Pinkerton or Kroll to burly thugs possibly related by marriage or otherwise beholden to the protectee.

When it gets down and dirty, however, these traditional bodyguards have not always been able to secure their charges, and the new genre of kidnapper is less likely to back-off merely because he meets some resistance.

Word on the streets of Manila is that an expanding cadre of former SAS, Company men, former Israeli military and similar fight-'em-to-the-cobblestones types are getting all the business they can handle.

One growth industry often leads to another.

— F.H.

million pesos of the ransom money. The Philippine Navy gave chase, but their poor equipment was no match for the ASG's powerful twin-engine craft.

If a whiff of \$4 million is more than competing ASG factions can stand, does this not translate to only two rival leaders at \$2 million each?

Extending The U.S. War On Terrorism

As Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld noted recently, "the United States has a long relationship with the Philippines." As a former colony and ally, mutual treaty obligations between the United States and the Philippines will no doubt outweigh independence considerations and Philippine constitutional restraints on foreign troops operating on their soil. The equipment and training packages evidenced by the materiel and troop movements are tangible evidence of the \$4.2 billion security assistance package to the Philippines, approved by the U.S. in the wake of 11 September. Last year the Philippines had received 100 surplus trucks and a C-130 transport and, in a separate development, received half a dozen surplus UH-1H Hueys. In addition, since the kidnapping of U.S. citizens by ASG is considered to be an international crime, the FBI has offered help, primarily with the loan of high-tech surveillance equipment, which appears to have been used to good effect. "This high-tech equipment seems to be helping," noted Philippine presidential spokesman Tiglao last June. In a White House visit late last year Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo won a Bush promise

for a specific \$100-million military-aid package that included tens of thousands of M16 rifles, three helicopters and a patrol craft, according to White House sources.

Acutely aware of their own problem with Islamic terrorists, and the obvious potential that some of their own were involved with the 11 September attack, the Philippine government was among the first to express moral and tangible support to President Bush, pledging the availability of former U.S. bases in the Philippines and other considerations. On 12 September, President Arroyo assured President Bush that American facilities in the Philippines, along with other key installations, will be secured, and that the Philippines will provide any help they can "to crush those responsible for this barbaric act." President Arroyo further granted a U.S. request to allow the emergency transit of civilians and goods from American bases in Asia-Pacific, and gave assurance that former U.S. bases at Clark and Subic Bay would be opened to allow American transit planes.

Vice President and Foreign Affairs Secretary Teofisto Guingona later announced the government will allow access to Clark and Subic, as Arroyo backed a U.S. plan to set up an international military force to crush global terrorism.

War Games With Live Targets

The stated six-month mission of American troops now on the ground — Exercise BALIKATAN (shouldering the

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REAL



OPERATORS

Custom Springfield Mil-Spec .45

TEXT & PHOTOS BY GARY PAUL JOHNSTON

This no-frills 1911A1 version of the new Operator can be a “have-it-your-way pistol!”

Designed 90 years ago by small arms genius John Moses Browning, the timeless Model of 1911 pistol is 100 times more popular today than it was then, and for one reason: It is the pistol that will never die.

Yes, everyone wants to get on the 1911 bandwagon, but a brand new 1911-style pistol has left most of them in the dust. It is a 1911 pistol that is truly tactical to better meet the needs of today's law enforcement professionals. It is the Mil-Spec Operator Model 1911-A1 from Springfield Armory.

In today's society, identifying one's target is vital, especially with regard to litigation and criminal charges. Quite simply, a police officer must shoot at what he/she knows, not at what they think. In the darkened conditions during which we so often encounter a potential threat, the only way to make this identification is with light.

When I became a police officer in Los Angeles in 1963, I was taught techniques for using my flashlight while shooting at night. When I retired nearly 30 years later, these techniques were better, but they still weren't the answer for some tactical situations. Although handgun lights had come into existence, they were offered for only a few pistols and holsters for pistols with lights mounted were just as scarce.

With the coming of the standardized M1913 Picatinny (Weaver-type) Rail designed by Mr. Richard Swan of A.R.M.S., things began to change. But even many pistols that have been equipped with Picatinny-style rails are less than well thought out. The



At the SureFire Institute, Johnston fired his Novak custom Springfield Operator extensively at night. The Millennium Tactical light was extremely bright. With its SureFire Tactical Weapon Light and Bianchi Cobra Series holster, Springfield's Novak Custom Mil-Spec Operator 1911-A1 pistol is ready for any tactical duty.

Operator has changed all that, along with a new SureFire tactical weapon light, but more on this light later.

Based on the time-proven 1911-A1 system, Springfield's Mil-Spec Operator uses a slide and frame significantly different from those of the standard pistol. Beginning just forward of the slide stop, the frame widens from the standard 0.77-inch to 0.84-inch and continues this dimension all the way to the end of the slide. Called the dust cover, this portion of the frame normally stops about an inch from the muzzle, but not in the Operator. In this pistol the extended frame runs the full length of the gun. With grooves run-

ning on each side of the dust cover all the way to the front, this rail system has seven cross channels on which to lock an accessory, most commonly a weapon light.

Like the frame, the slide of the Mil-Spec Operator is square all the way to the muzzle omitting the stylish cuts normally found on its lower front. Here on each side is a set of angular square serrations matching those on the rear of the slide. Finished in a matte blue, the pistol is contrasted by its natural stainless steel barrel and bushing. That pretty well sums up the basics of the Mil-Spec Operator Model 1911-A1, but basics are only part of the story.

Internal Locking System

The Mil-Spec Operator comes with a very good trigger and is well fitted with no play between slide, barrel and frame. The pistol also has Springfield's revolutionary new patented Integral Locking System (ILS) that is standard on this, as well as all new Springfield 1911-style pistols. Consisting of a small rotating lock located in the upper left of the mainspring housing, the ILS is turned with a special key to block or unblock the mainspring cap from moving when the hammer is in the down position. Once turned "ON," the ILS locks up the pistol, preventing it from being cocked and the slide from being retracted until unlocking it with the special key.

A "Have It Your Way" Operator

Although the Springfield Operator pistol is also available in a full-house custom grade called the Operator Tactical Response Pistol (TRP), it is the standard Mil-Spec Operator 1911-A1 that is my favorite. Being Spartan by comparison, this version of the Operator pistol comes with fewer special features yet is affordable. Just as importantly, it lends itself to being customized with options suit the individual user.

After receiving one of the first Mil-Spec. 1911-A1 Operator pistols from Springfield, I decided to have it customized by Novak's Inc. using some of the high-grade 1911 parts from Ed Brown Products. The custom parts included a Match barrel/bushing, speed

hammer, trigger, extended thumb-safety and grip safety. After Joe Bonar, of Novak's, fitted these parts, he installed a Videki Match trigger. He also did a reliability package, a carry-bevel package, beveled the magazine well and had the frontstrap machine checkered. Last but not least, Bonar installed a set of Ghost Sights with Trijicon night inserts.

LaserMax Sight

Another accessory I was anxious to test on the Mil-Spec Operator was the new 1911 laser sight from LaserMax. Replacing the recoil spring guide and plug, this unit provides most original 1911 type pistols with a powerful pulsating laser beam positioned directly under the barrel. The new LaserMax fit the Springfield Mil-Spec Operator pistol perfectly and performed just as well. It is the first LaserMax sight adjustable for windage and elevation by turning an Allen bolt near the front of the laser tube.

Designed to pulsate rapidly, the LaserMax accomplishes three things: First, the pulsating makes it almost impossible for the user to lose sight of the beam even under stress. In addition, the pulsating dot is extremely intimidating when seen reflecting on an object such as a wall, or coming across a floor during a building search. Finally, this pulsating greatly lengthens the life of the battery, and LaserMax recommends



(clockwise, from top) Mounting instantly on its Picatinny rail, SureFire's Millennium Tactical Weapon Light locks onto the Operator until the user removes it. For fast target acquisition day or night, Johnston had Novak's install its Ghost Sight with its half-ghost ring along with Trijicon night inserts. After it was full-house customized by Novak's, Inc., Johnston's Springfield Operator pistol had a number of its factory parts replaced by Match parts from Ed Brown Products.

changing the battery only once each year under normal use (a lot less often than your flashlight batteries).

Bianchi Cobra Holster

New from Bianchi International is the Cobra System. Designed around a universal light-mount holster, the system accommodates a number of other accessories and is employed with a simple belt of the user's choice. The belt I chose with the Cobra System with the Instructor Belt from Wilderness Tactical Products. Made of ballistic nylon, the Cobra holster is opened to accept the 1911 pistol equipped with the tactical weapon light of choice. With the gun and light in the holster, the rig is wrapped around the gun/light, and secured with the wide Velcro strap provided. The holster is then semi-permanently dedicated to that pistol/light combination.

My custom Operator was finished just before I was scheduled to leave for the SureFire Institute and I had just enough time to test fire the pistol and make sure the sights and LaserMax were on before leaving for California. The gun ran perfectly in all respects and I was able to shoot groups of 2 inches or less with it at 25 yards. It also fit perfectly into the Bianchi Cobra Tactical Holster mounted with its new SureFire Millennium Tactical Weapon Light. What is a Millennium Light, you ask?

Fighting With Light

After forming a company called Laser Products in 1978, John Matthews entered the tactical light business in the early 1980s. Laser Products was making some fine lights back then. Smaller than conventional flashlights, they put out twice the light (about 60 lumens), but were largely misunderstood. While



As illustrated here, accuracy from our sample Mil-Spec Operator pistol was outstanding at 25 yards.

these lights could fill the role of flashlights, they were the first true tactical lights. Gradually, John Matthews got the word out about the unique capabilities of his SureFire Tactical Lights, and he thought he held a pat hand. Actually, the cards Matthews was holding beat those of anyone else in the game, but the game was about to change.

In the late 1990s, John Matthews learned about a new U.S. Navy Special Warfare training facility operated by U.S. Navy S.E.A.L., Dan Good, in San Diego. Consisting of a U.S. Navy ship, the facility was used to train S.E.A.L.s in ship-boarding intervention. As

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SPRINGFIELD OPERATOR PISTOL

SPECIFICATIONS

- Caliber:** .45 ACP.
- Operation:** Short recoil, semi-automatic.
- Barrel Length:** 5 inches.
- Overall Length:** 8-5/8 inches.
- Weight:** 42 oz.
- Safety:** Thumb safety, grip safety and new Internal Locking System.
- Sights:** Fixed 1911-A1 type sights.
- Feed Device:** 7-shot box magazine.
- Finish:** Parkerized.
- Price:** \$756.00.



THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL

The last issue of SOF examined the impact of the recent executive order issued by President Bush, that subjects the suspects of 9-11, or al-Qaeda operators, to trial by military tribunals. Many of the states who are parties to the Council of Europe have made it quite clear that the U.S. policy of trying suspected terrorists in military tribunals is unacceptable and that the imposition of the death penalty is a barbaric practice. Thus, if a suspect is apprehended in the territory of parties to the Council of Europe, which includes over 40 members, that suspect will not be extradited to the U.S. unless the U.S. gives guarantees of no military trials or death penalties. The International Court of Justice (ICC), when it becomes operational, will become the viable option — if not the mandatory alternative — for U.S. allies and other states parties to deal with al-Qaeda or 9-11 suspects accused of war crimes or crimes against humanity.

Although the United States is facing the prospect that it may not be able to try suspects of 9-11 or al-Qaeda operatives, an even greater concern is that 9-11 and the executive order authorizing military tribunals have unexpectedly accelerated the process by which the ICC becomes operational. In 1998, when Rome hosted a conference for finalization of the ICC treaty, the reality of the implementation of the ICC seemed remote. But since 9-11 the number of countries who have ratified the treaty increased from 34 to 48 by

year-end, a fast-track ratification as far as treaties go. U.S. policy makers are sensing even more urgency, as the treaty will go into force and become binding on the states that ratified it as soon as it is ratified by 60 countries.

The original concern regarding the ICC is that U.S. troops risk facing tribunals with foreign prosecutors, foreign judges, and procedures that might violate the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights.

Is the creature that was born in Rome indeed a “Monster”? Dutch delegate to Rome, Gam Strijard was quoted as saying: “I won’t say we gave birth to a monster, but the baby has some defects.”

“The myopic Dutchman may see a defective baby,” William F. Jasper wrote in *The New American*, “but any sober, rational evaluation of the ICC will confirm that the creature born in Rome is indeed a monster.”

Or is the ICC a culmination of a century’s efforts to be able to halt and/or punish mass murderers and tyrants such as Pol Pot, Saddam Hussein or Stalin? As Michael Scharf, of the New England School of Law reminds, the superpowers’ pledge of “never” again after the holocaust of WWII, quickly became the reality of “again and again” as the world community failed to take action when tens of thousands disappeared under the Pinochet and Argentine regimes, when thousands of Kurds were gassed by Saddam Hussein, when over 2 million were butchered in Pol Pot’s killing fields,

and thousands were massacred in East Timor by paramilitaries sponsored by the Indonesian military.

In either case, what is the implication for U.S. troops? Will they face the prospect of being tried by a foreign court? What is the worst-case scenario? According to Jasper, Dr. Charles Rice, professor of law at Notre Dame University, has termed the ICC “a monster” both in concept and reality, noting that it effectively “repudiates the Constitution the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence and cancels the 4th of July ... the super jurisdictional ICC,” he points out, “has no legitimate basis for its claimed authority, no protections against abuses, no accountability and virtually no limits to its jurisdiction.”

USA Today reported that a 29 December U.S. airstrike hit a civilian enclave in Afghanistan. Red Cross workers confirmed that the raid killed civilians after counting 52 bodies and body parts, half of which were children.

“There was no al-Qaeda group there” said Afghani local Aji Akhter Jan, who told officials that the Afghani who informed the U.S. of the supposed al-Qaeda stronghold had a grudge against two extended families that lived on the compound devastated by the U.S. raid. The U.S. military had allegedly once again been misled and

COURT

Will a Foreign Court Be Able To Try U.S. Peacekeeping Troops?

BY DR. MARTIN BRASS

caught in the centuries old web of tribal intrigue, jealousies and hatreds.

Afghan officials claim that faulty intelligence reports also led to an American attack on a convoy heading to Kabul 20 December for the inauguration of U.S.-approved interim leader Hamid Karzai. The victims, some Afghani officials claim, were not enemy troops, but were former Taliban officials who had switched their allegiance to Karzai. The Pentagon, on the other hand, attempted to justify its action by claiming that the convoy included members of the Taliban and that the 29 December strike targeted a pro-Taliban military compound.

It is these types of scenarios that strikes fear into the hearts of the U.S. military and understandably so.

The United States jumped into bed with some strange bedfellows in Rome in July 1998, as it joined six other countries — Israel, Iraq, Libya, Algeria, Yemen, Qatar and China — in voting against the ICC, while 120 countries voted for establishing the Court and 17 abstained.

Although the Clinton administration objected to the ICC in Rome, largely, as spokesman James Rubin put it, because the ICC is “a rush to judgment that does not adequately reflect the important role that America and our armed forces play around the world,” it was that same administration that had jump-started the process that had lain



The Victors write the history, and the victors generally write the laws that will govern the next war. After WWII the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal, conducted by the allies, judged and meted punishment to Nazi war criminals.

dormant for decades. So, why did the Clinton administration even bother to show up in Rome? It had no choice, as under international law, a state that makes no input into the initial negotiations of a treaty cannot expect even limited protections that it might demand. The Clinton Administration would have been grossly negligent had it not become involved since it was responsible for sending U.S. peacekeepers to

more missions than any other administration in recent history.

Why The ICC Could Spell Trouble

How will the International Criminal Court (ICC) function when it goes into operation? Many of the procedures and definitions are still unclear, but one can anticipate various situations based upon the codified Rome treaty.

Of course, it is important to note

that the provisions of the ICC treaty do not apply retroactively, in line with the principle of no *ex post facto* implementation of a criminal statute. So our first assumption is that the ICC was in place since the beginning of the U.S. action in Afghanistan.

Let's assume further for our first scenario that the United States is not party to the treaty. That assumption is not far-fetched, since the U.S. took more than 40 years to become a party to the Genocide Convention, which it had largely written after WWII. Indeed, Senator Jesse Helms has repeatedly said that the ICC treaty would be "dead on arrival" in the Senate.

The second assumption is that the Afghanistan legitimate government has decided to become party to the treaty. Its accession to the treaty could possibly put the United States in a difficult situation, if the interim Afghan government forced the United States to withdraw after having paved the way for it to take control, by eliminating the Taliban. The Afghani officials have stated emphatically that innocent civilians have been killed. A prosecutor might then investigate and indeed determine that the Fourth Geneva Convention had



Reuters Archive

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan opens the conference in Rome in 1998, to establish an International Criminal Court with a declaration that the world owed it to millions of victims of genocide to create a bulwark against evil. A great humanitarian premise — but can it be made to work as a tool of justice, and not a tool of various national interests?

been violated and that war crimes had been committed.

Thus, U.S. armed forces operating in Afghanistan and charged with war crimes would be subjected to the jurisdiction of the court, even if the United

States refuses to become a party.

As the United States is not a party, it could not exercise the one-time opt-out of war crimes and immunize its soldiers against war crimes for a period of seven years.

DEFINING THE CRIMES

The subject matter of the ICC includes the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression. These crimes are codified in the Geneva Conventions, the Genocide Convention and the Nuremberg Statute, among others. In addition, the ICC will have the jurisdiction to invoke or implement any international law of armed conflict. .

The crime of aggression is yet to be defined, but traditionally it includes bombardment, invasion, mining of harbors, hostile blockades, training and arming insurgency groups, sending in foreign troops or mercenaries to fight the legitimate government, etc.

Listed war crimes include grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, namely willful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments, willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, extensive destruction and appropriation of property

Other serious violations of the laws and customs applicable in international armed conflict include intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population ... or civilian objects ... attacking or bombarding, by whatever means, towns, villages, dwellings or buildings which are undefended or not military objectives

In the case of an armed conflict, not of an international character, or civil war, serious violations of Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions incorporate Geneva Convention violations in civil war situations.

Crimes against humanity includes any of the following acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population with knowledge of the attack: murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, imprisonment, torture, rape, sexual slavery, enforced disappearances, apartheid, etc.

Terrorism and drug-related crime definitions were adopted in an annex.

On the one hand, as William F. Jasper, of *The New American* writes, the list of war crimes is broad enough for a UN Panzer division to drive through. On the other hand, one must note that the multitude of listed crimes have been codified for years and the United States was very instrumental in drafting these codes.

As Jasper asks, can we really consider allowing a panel of UN judges to decide whether a U.S. bombardment or other operation constitutes a crime of causing "great suffering" or "serious injury to health?" Can we truly contemplate that listed crimes are a matter of perspective? On the other hand, the definitions of the crimes have been allowing ICC "jurists" to determine if a Marine sniper or an Army patrol carrying out an ambush of an enemy force is guilty of "killing treacherously" ... And what constitutes "knowledge" that an attack will cause "incidental loss of life or injury"

Only time will tell.

— M.B.

In any case, the opt-out provision applies only to war crimes. In our case scenario, the prosecutor could follow through with the investigation of war crimes, as well as crimes against humanity, genocide and possibly crimes of aggression. In no case can a state immunize its troops against charges of genocide or crimes against humanity. (see sidebar).

The Bedevilment Is In The Details

The prosecutor would investigate the nature and frequency of the incidents in the U.S. bombing offensive that resulted in non-combatant deaths. Already, the prosecutor has become aware of the two above-mentioned incidents and many others have been reported by non-governmental agencies like the International Committee of the Red Cross. The Afghani Government could bring a case to the prosecutor, as well as could other states, or the prosecutor could initiate an investigation independently.

As Michael Scharf, of the New England School of law points out, the prosecutor, who could be of any nationality, may be an international Ken Starr "who would bedevil U.S. military personnel and officials." The fear is that a prosecutor may come from or be pressured by either hostile regimes or friendly countries that wish to check an aggressive foreign policy of the world's remaining superpower.

One safeguard against spurious complaints by the prosecutor that the United States succeeded in incorporating in the treaty, during the acrimonious negotiations, is the requirement that a three-judge pre-trial chamber approve before the prosecution can launch an investigation. But who would be the judges?

The treaty provides for the election, by secret ballot, by the representatives of the various states, of 18 judges serving concurrently, each to a nine-year term, and each from a separate state party. The concern often expressed is, what would preclude the majority of these judges coming from unfriendly countries?

The United States lost its fight to have all prosecutions subject to a Security Council veto. In the opinion of the states assembly, the objective of the ICC would be defeated if any permanent member could immunize itself and its allies from a prosecution, resulting in selective justice. One escape hatch which the United States successfully fought for is the notion that the United States or any other state can

request an affirmatively vote in the Security Council to postpone an investigation for up to 12 months, on a renewable basis. One permanent member cannot veto, but a vote must be taken. A postponement in the instant case would depend on the Security Council members, but one such as China cannot veto a decision that the indictment be put on hold.

The situation could have been far worse had the Clinton administration not fought and succeeded in killing the principle of universal jurisdiction in the treaty. Largely due to U.S. efforts, jurisdiction has been limited to the territory of the state where the crime was committed or the state of nationality of the



Reuters Photo Archive

Former Yugoslav President Milosevic enters courtroom of the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, before his pre-trial hearing. Would a permanent international court prevent such individuals from committing genocide if they knew it was waiting for them?

perpetrator of the crime if those two states are parties to the ICC or have consented to the jurisdiction of the court.

Had universal jurisdiction been codified in the ICC treaty, all states parties would have been empowered to take into custody a citizen of any state found on its territory that may be suspected of war crimes, genocide or crimes against humanity, no matter where the

alleged crime may have been committed. Not only could U.S. peacekeepers be arrested outside of Afghanistan or the United States by any member state, but a member state is obligated to arrest one suspected of crimes subject to the ICC in order to fulfill its commitment under the treaty.

Our Universal Jurisdiction Vs. Their Universal Jurisdiction

Universal jurisdiction, according to Henry Kissinger, is an aberration.

Cries of outrage or illegality by the United States over the concept of universal jurisdiction are disingenuous, as the United States was instrumental in developing the concept from the time it shoved the Nuremberg statute through the Security Council.

The United States helped draft and is party to dozens of treaties that grant universal jurisdiction to all state parties to prosecute any citizen found in its territory suspected of committing an international crime, no matter where the act was committed. International crimes include torture, hijacking, terrorism, apartheid, war crimes, genocide, piracy, slavery, and hostage taking. The United States reserves the right to, and has exercised, jurisdiction over aliens without the consent of their state of nationality regardless of whether the state of nationality was party to a treaty.

In *US v. Yunis*, the United States indicted, apprehended and prosecuted a Lebanese national for hijacking a Jordanian Airliner from Beirut, where two of the passengers were U.S. citizens. The United States asserted jurisdiction on the basis of The Hague Hijacking Convention, despite the fact that Lebanon was not a party to the treaty and did not consent to Yunis's prosecution.

The Yunis precedent was reaffirmed in 1998 in the *US v. Ali Rezaq*, where the United States apprehended and prosecuted a Palestinian for hijacking an Egyptian airliner.

The Pinochet case exemplifies the invoking of universal jurisdiction of former heads of state. Any state party to the torture convention, including Spain and the U.K., had jurisdiction over anyone indicted for torture. The obligation of the U.K., where Pinochet was found, was either to extradite him to Spain that had issued an indictment or to his national state, Chile, or to try him in a U.K. court. Pinochet escaped prosecu-

Continued on page 76

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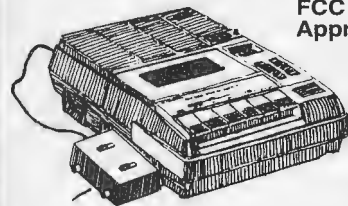
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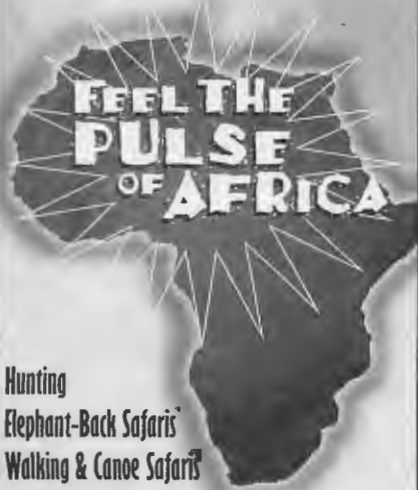
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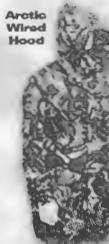
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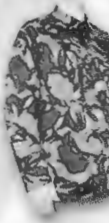
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The Battle For Kabul

Continued from page 41

SpecOps

There were several decisive elements behind the Taliban collapse. First and often overlooked — was the fact that between 1996-2001, the United Front had succeeded against the odds in surviving repeated Taliban onslaughts. Under the charismatic leadership of Ahmadshah Massoud, it fought on not simply as a scattered guerrilla force but critically as a semi-regular army of some 12,000-15,000. Those forces tied down large numbers of Taliban and their allies in fixed positions both in northeastern Takhar province and on the Kabul front, providing U.S. bombers in late October and early November with a decidedly “target rich environment”.

Since the spring of 2001 Massoud had also implemented a strategy of reviving guerrilla operations beyond his northeastern base area in pockets of resistance across northern and central Afghanistan. These “behind the lines” pockets were to prove critical in the final domino-like collapse that began in the hills south of the northern city of Mazar.

It's worth adding that the UF's resistance to repeated offensives by the Taliban and bin Laden's forces, generally coordinated and supplied by the Pakistani military, owed no thanks to Washington or the West. Over those critical years as the Taliban and the terrorist base in Afghanistan expanded in tandem, Washington sat and watched. Even after the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in East Africa and the pinpointing of bin Laden's Afghanistan sanctuary as a direct threat to U.S. interests globally there was no regular intel liaison with the only force actually combating al-Qaida on the ground. Indeed, Massoud was viewed with considerable skepticism, and even hostility, by the diplomatic suits in Islamabad. No one, it seemed, wanted to offend the Pakistanis or disturb their not-so-covert proxy terrorist-funded war in Afghanistan.

Slain by an Arab suicide bomber 9 September, Massoud himself did not survive to see the victory of his forces over al-Qaida and the Taliban. But when, after 11 September, America needed an ally in the field ready and willing to lay down lives, Massoud's army was there. Had it not been, hundreds if not thousands of American and Western lives would have been lost rooting out the Taliban-al Qaida nexus in Afghanistan.

Against this strategic backdrop, the impressive capabilities of U.S. and Brit SpecOps forces coordinating with long-range airpower were also critical to victory. Armed with state-of-the art digital weaponry in the form of laptops and ground laser target designators, this elite from Delta, CIA Special Operations Group and the SAS was able form front-line positions to bring down precision-guided munitions (PGMs) such as laser-guided 1,000 lb. GBU-16 bomb and 5,000 lb. GBU-28 laser-guided Bunker Busters against specific targets. This unprecedented link-up between small SF teams on frontline and long range airpower effectively saw close air support, once the domain of attack choppers and low-flying ground attack fighters, delivered with devastating punch and accuracy by B-1, B-2 and B-52 heavy bombers. In early November the role of U.S. SF teams calling in accurate airstrikes against Taliban armor and artillery was decisive on all fronts, but especially south of Mazar.

There is also no doubt that the Taliban leadership, blinded by its own minimal understanding of the outside world, made fundamental miscalculations over the nature of the war they were inviting. While the Pentagon was experimenting

with the technology and methods of the next war, the Taliban were eager to fight for the last triumph of spirit over technology that had characterized the anti-Soviet war of the 1980s. They failed completely to understand, that for both political and logistical reasons, Washington was not going to oblige with an invasion of 100,000 men; or that the technological changes of the past decade permitted an aerial campaign of far greater potency than anything the Soviets had been able to bring to bear.

But ironically even as the Taliban defied Washington to a re-run of the 1980s, their own pretensions to national government and the stubborn survival of the UF, committed them to a war of fixed positions that was a very long way from the hit-and-run guerrilla war waged by the mujahideen against the Soviets.

No Command And Control

The amazing speed of the Taliban collapse, both outside Kabul and across the north generally, also stemmed from the apparent disintegration of the movement's command and control (C2) mechanisms. Despite the fairly rudimentary nature of Taliban military organization, the ethnically fragmented composition of their forces, including Afghans, Pakistanis, Arabs, Chechens, Central Asians and others, along with a wide area of operations, meant that C2 was vitally important, not least in a defensive campaign.

Two causes lay behind collapse of the C2 infrastructure: First was the progressive disruption of facilities and personnel caused by U.S. bombing, not least in the first two weeks of the air campaign (7-21 October) during which the focus of bombing was on air defense assets and military infrastructure and concentrations in and around major urban areas. During this initial phase, high-profile C2 facilities, such as the Defense Ministry and important al-Qaida camps were targeted. After 21 October, and particularly in the first week of November, airstrikes moved decisively into the forward edge of battle area (FEBA) targeting command posts as well as armor and artillery. The cumulative impact cannot have been pretty.

But undoubtedly important, too, was the withdrawal in September of the element that since 1995 had been critical to the fighting cohesion of the Taliban military machine: field officers of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI). There's compelling circumstantial evidence to indicate that ISI personnel played a decisive role in planning, advising and liaising in all of the Taliban's major campaigns through to summer 2001. It was arguably this input that served to mold a disparate force of ill-trained Afghans and foreign volunteers, nominally commanded by a bunch of semi-educated village *mullahs*, into a well-oiled military machine, backed by armor, artillery and intelligence, capable of taking over most of a country.

Conversely, the abrupt withdrawal of this cadre of experienced and professional advisors in September as Islamabad cut most of its ties with the Taliban, can be assumed to have been disastrous. Neither Taliban commanders nor their foreign allies had any experience of planning at the strategic level.

Last and not least, in minority areas of northern Afghanistan and in the capital, Kabul, the Taliban were viewed as an oppressive Pushtun army of occupation backed by Pakistanis and Arabs. There was thus never any chance of these forces falling back for a protracted, house-to-house defense of urban areas: They were cordially hated. And as their hasty flights showed well enough, they knew it.

Mike Winchester is a frequent contributor to SOF. ✕

Yank In Afghanistan

PART 2



This is the second part of a saga by Gene Scroft, the nom guerre of West Point graduate Lance Motley, who served with the 82nd Airborne and 75th Rangers. He went to Afghanistan in 1984 (see "Holy War Combat Tour," SOF, Dec. '86) to volunteer for military service with the mujahideen. After a short disappointing stay in the remote tri-border region, Motley returned to Pakistan and joined a caravan headed toward Badghis, located in north central Afghanistan, east of the Morghab Rver and north of the Hari Rud.

This second trip took Motley into the central Hazarajat — populated by pro-Khomeini, Shi'ite Muslims of Mongolian descent — and over the western edge of the Hindu Kush mountains, along trails rising from 6,500 to 14,000 feet. Motley walked for 50 days through geographic extremes ranging from barren salt pans to green valleys lush beneath the abandoned drabness of 16th- and 17th-century mud forts squatting on ridgelines above. But like his first foray, in Badghis Motley met resistance cells more interested in complaining about Soviet invaders than killing them.

Still hungry for battle, Motley decided to strike out for Herat, a major city near the Iranian border. After announcing his intention, Motley was robbed of his rifle while asleep and then sent under armed guard to a village near Baba Morghab. From there he went from village to village until he reached Herat.

Since Motley was in Herat, the mujahideen leadership there had made public appeals for help in surviving particularly ferocious attacks by the Soviets and Afghan troops from the puppet government. The Afghan resistance typically exaggerated victories and minimized losses, so such a public appeal must have meant the situation in Herat was particularly bad for the freedom fighters.

But while Motley was there, the resistance fared much better. And under tracer-lit night skies, Motley found what he was seeking: combat. He helped the mujahideen attack a militia post one night. It was a mixed success. The target was overrun, but Motley was almost killed because of difficulty distinguishing good guys from bad. In his second Herat firefight, he again came under friendly fire while clearing a building. But it was a more clear-cut victory, one that included a torched Communist Party school and the capture of 10 prisoners, eight assault rifles and a 7.62mm machine gun, all without losing a single man.

This second and final part of Motley's story begins with the fate of those 10 prisoners.

West Pointer Finds His Battle

BY LANCE MOTLEY
(AKA "GENE SCROFT")

Prisoners often are a problem. Guarding them is a manpower drain, usually more trouble than it's worth. And communist troops in Afghanistan rarely fight to the last man. Usually there are three options. All are aimed at producing assets and eliminating liabilities for the Afghan resistance.

Option one: Captured Herat residents are offered to their families for a ransom. The family must guarantee they will not return to enemy ranks. This option provides revenue to the mujahideen group, known in Herat as a "committee."

Option two: Prisoners from other areas are offered the chance to join the mujahideen. This boosts manpower.

Option three: A firing squad. This eliminates the need for guards. It also makes options one and two popular choices. Many of the best mujahideen warriors once served the communists.

Actually there is a fourth option — not really an option, as far as the prisoner is concerned — reserved for those avowing Communist Party membership, or who are subsequently identified as such. I witnessed one example.

We searched a prisoner and found a communist membership card in his pocket. His bare feet were tied to a pole. The mujahideen whipped his feet with a 1-inch-thick stick. This technique is known as *bastanado*, a Spanish word meaning "to hit with a stick." The practice originated in the Orient, spread throughout Central Asia and finally to Spain. The pain is excruciating for the subject, extremely effective for the interrogator. In 30 seconds the prisoner was crying like a baby. Before the minute was up, he had begun naming communist agents who had infiltrated mujahideen "committees." Two days later, after he had given up all useful information, he was shot.

Some cases weren't as clear-cut. The communists often kidnap men from as far away as Jalalabad to serve in Herat. In a strange city they feel isolated and so are less likely to defect. When we captured a man in the bazaar, whom no one recognized and who refused to name his village, we decided he must be a transplanted communist.

After three days of beatings, he still couldn't, or wouldn't, tell us anything. One night he grabbed his guard's rifle and tried to escape. The mujahideen cut him down before he went three steps.

A Miraculous Escape

Prisoners of both sides in Afghanistan are subject to torture and execution. While I was in Herat, a mujahideen spy at an Afghan government facility was captured. He was beaten repeatedly, then hooked up for electric-shock torture. After this failed to elicit the desired information, he was buried up to his neck. He remained this way for weeks and was subjected to ruthless questioning. One day an interrogator, overcome with frustration at the prisoner's refusal to talk, finally shot him in the head and walked away.

Darkness. He felt his eyes open. Darkness. It was a few minutes before the prisoner was convinced he was still alive. The bullet had passed through the right side of his head and exited through his cheek. Miraculously, nothing vital was damaged. He remained motionless in the darkness for a few more hours, still believing that this ultimately would be his grave. Amazed at his survival, he was still frozen by the fear that his would-be executioners were waiting. He finally dug himself out and half ran, half crawled through the fields to our committee.

Afghanistan is a total war. There are no real rules of engagement or no-fire zones. Typical of modern guerrilla war-



On the road to Herat. We must have felt brave on this day since we're traveling during daylight hours.

fare, it's often impossible to tell the difference between civilians and combatants. War in Afghanistan is brutal and barbarous, the way war must be — lest we grow too fond of it.

The Third Attack

Abdul Ahmad, the commander of my committee, decided to attack an enemy post overlooking an important crossroads in Herat. About midnight we positioned our recoilless on a roof 100 meters from the post. We planned to attack through a garden, but the entrance was boarded up. I began to cut the wires holding the boards together with a Soviet bayonet when the recoilless opened fire.

I felt a sharp pain in my shoulder. The gunner had fired so short that I'd been hit by a fragment from an 82mm mortar round. It wasn't serious, but being hit by my own people pissed me off.

We pushed the debris from the door and ran into a storage room in the garden. Unfortunately, a 12-foot-high wall stood between the garden and the post. The mujahideen immediately began to argue about what to do next.

After about five minutes of wasted talk, I ran into the garden to look for a way into the post. I was surveying the area from behind a well when a grenade exploded. The new Soviet



A pro-communist turncoat gets the full pre-interrogation treatment. Guarding prisoners is a manpower drain.

grenades use a perforated wire for shrapnel — just like the American models — and one of the fragments hit me in the head. I could taste the blood pouring down my face. But the wound wasn't deep, so I just bandaged it with my scarf and ran into a row of rooms along the side of the garden.

Moving from room to room, I was able to get up against the inside of an exterior wall. I still couldn't see the post, though. After throwing some grenades over the wall, I ran back to the well. Another grenade was thrown from the post's second story and landed right in front of me. I ran for cover in the storage room. But I wasn't quick enough. It exploded, peppering my ass with shrapnel.

I was already dizzy from the head wound. Now the metal in my butt made it difficult to walk. But I didn't complain. There were mere scratches compared to some of the wounds I'd seen in Herat.

Our garden position was worthless, so we moved back to the recoilless. The enemy had fled after the 82mm finally found its range, so the only fire we received was from a 12.7mm machine gun a block away. Dodging the 12.7mm tracers that raked the rooftops, we dropped into the post.

We found one commie hiding in the compound. I was angry at being hit three times without a good shot at the enemy, so I took out my anger on this guy. I punched the prisoner in the nose, splattering blood over both of us. Abdul Ahmad killed him before we left.

Riding By The Russians

Weeks passed without an attack after this battle. As frustrating as it was, it was the old soldier's game: waiting. I was complaining about the inactivity to Dr. Amin when another of his guests offered to take me to fight along with his committee.

We hailed a *karachi*, a horse-drawn taxi, and headed for the eastern part of the city. Karachis continue to operate throughout Herat. It takes more than war to stop personal enterprise. We moved down a broad street directly toward a fort with a red flag flying from its tower. I asked if maybe we should turn off the main road to avoid getting shot. My escort just laughed and explained that this post was one of about a half-dozen that had a special agreement with the



A rest break as we head toward our next target. Soviet Mi-8s and -24s were always a risk.

mujahideen: You don't bother us and we won't bother you.

I was well-treated at the new committee, but I could see that the commander wasn't overly committed to combat. One young mujahideen, about 18 years old, named Ibrahim noticed my disappointment and bravely offered to take me on an attack with him. I jumped at the chance.

I had no idea what we were going to attack. There were only four of us. But it felt good to be on the prowl again. We moved through back alleys for about an hour and then climbed to the rooftops. The inhabitants weren't too happy with our uninvited intrusion, but we just ignored them.

At 0900 hours we crawled onto a roof surrounded by walls 4 feet high. I looked over the wall and saw an enemy position less than 100 meters away. I thought our position was pretty good. We could blow the hell out of them with our RPGs and withdraw before they came to their senses. The RPG-2 is an old weapon but effective at close range.

A Tactics Lesson

My enthusiasm ebbed when I looked over the wall to our right and saw another communist position just across the street. Ibrahim had placed us in the perfect place to receive crossfire from both posts. This boy definitely needed a lesson in tactics.

All the mujahideen except for Ibrahim disappeared downstairs when I loaded one of our two rockets. I decided it wasn't important. Better one brave comrade than an army of cowards.

The rocket I fired hit just below the sandbags of the enemy position. Two of the enemy were cut in half as they had their morning tea. Both posts responded immediately and our roof erupted with machine-gun impacts. We were pinned down but safe from direct fire as long as we squatted against the wall.

Our situation on the rooftop reminded me of one of those war movies in which someone could put a helmet on a stick and hold it above the trench only to get it shot full of holes. I overcame my temptation to ape



A convoy of friendlies moves peacefully by, as we sit in wait for an armored Soviet unit.

Ibrahim and fire blind over the wall. When I was in the Army I always told my troops to either aim their fire or don't shoot. I wasn't going to let a little stress turn me into a hypocrite.

Holding my breath, I popped over the wall and fired three or four aimed shots before taking cover. I continued to engage the enemy in this way until my ammunition ran low. I don't know if I was any more effective than Ibrahim, but I did feel better for it.

After about 15 minutes of throwing grenades, exchanging rifle fire and yelling insults, we moved to a rooftop closer to the second post. I had to balance myself on stacked boxes in order to fire the RPG over a high wall. The rocket hit the post and wounded one of the militiamen. We finally withdrew when we ran out of ammunition.

On the way back, we had to cross a road the enemy had under fire. Feeling pretty cocky, I ran back and forth across the road yelling obscenities at the enemy. Childish, but great fun.

A Battle In The Bazaar

The next day we headed for the bazaar again. One of the men in Ibrahim's committee needed a rifle. Our plan was to kill a group of three communist militiamen who policed the bazaar and take their weapons. (Other bazaars in Herat are controlled by the mujahideen.)

At about 1400 hours we found an alley that lead directly toward the militia sentry post, which was located in a small room with a firing port cut into the wall. The committee member without a rifle, a kid about 16 years old, nonchalantly walked up the alley and threw a grenade at the room's opening. He missed. It exploded harmlessly in the street, alerting every enemy in the neighborhood.

I moved toward the room, trying to keep as flat as possible against the alley wall. Ibrahim was right behind me. We were dead if someone took an aimed shot out of the firing port.

At the end of the alley we began getting fire from the same two posts we had attacked the day before. The rounds impacted about a foot above our heads — if we bent at the waist. Giggling like school kids, we shouted insults at the enemy: *Kuni!* (homosexual), *Kaffir!* (infidel); things like that.

The room was 5 meters away across the bazaar road. I threw two grenades and they exploded inside the room. I was sure that the occupants were down, but I decided to throw another. I pulled the pin. Before I could throw it, Kalashnikov fire exploded all around me. Some sucker was still alive in there.

We quickly retreated down the alley. While we laughed at our close call, I noticed that I still had the pinless grenade in my hand! Luckily, I hadn't released the spoon. The enemy was too far away for an accurate throw, so I decided to roll the grenade in front of the room and use the dust to cover my second throw.

My roll was short and the grenade exploded at the end of the alley. I ran up behind the dust anyway and threw another grenade into the room. After the explosion, someone called out from the room, begging for us to stop throwing grenades. He threw his Kalashnikov into the street. That didn't do us much good. Tracer rounds from the two posts flew back and forth directly over the rifle.

A Foolish Risk

The kid without a weapon was almost drooling as he looked at the rifle in the street. I knew that he was trying to decide if he should try to run out and pick it up. I then decided to do something a professional soldier should never do: I decided to take a foolish risk and grab the rifle myself.

By now I had a reputation for bravery and I wasn't going to be shown up by the kid. I laid my weapon down and ran across the street. My plan was to grab the rifle on the run, dive into the room and kill everything inside. Well, about mid-stride I thought better of it and decided not to slow down and pick up the rifle. I didn't want to be any more of a target that I had to be.

Because of this split-second decision, I entered the room unarmed. There was only one militiaman sitting in the corner. Even after three grenades exploded in that little room, he was only slightly wounded. But I had no trouble taking him prisoner. I removed his ammo belt and vest (I needed a vest) and tried to get him to stand up. He wouldn't budge.

I called out to the mujahideen that everything was OK and started hitting the commie in the face as an incentive to stand up. The kid who needed a rifle ran over and picked up the Kalashnikov, but when he saw me hitting this guy he ran back to the alley.

Finally I picked up the commie and threw him out the door. Instead of running into the alley, he stopped in the middle of the street and begged not to be taken prisoner. The mujahideen obliged — they shot him at least 50 times. A piece of his skull flew off and cut my arm. It was my only wound of the day.

RPG Roadwork

Four days later we decided to conduct an ambush along the concrete road leading to the airport. At first light, Ibrahim placed three men and his RPG-7 in an abandoned house about 300 meters from the road. It was a poor position. A Soviet T-62 tank was parked only 200 meters away and 300 meters was a long shot for untrained RPG gunners.



(left) Some down time in my tent with my worry beads getting a workout.

(below) A pre-mission briefing conducted by one of the commanders.



I convinced Ibrahim to move closer to the road. We ended up in a stream about 70 meters from the road and right next to a hotel used as a Soviet base. Initially I was angry that Ibrahim put us so close to the hotel, but I wouldn't hold a grudge against someone so willing to fight.

The three other mujahideen stayed hidden in the vineyard behind us. So this would be another two-man show. Ibrahim said that he knew how to use the RPG-7, but when I checked the sight, it was set for 500 meters — our kill zone was only 70 meters away. I decided to fire the RPG and told Ibrahim to load another round immediately after the first was fired. Most RPG first shots are misses and I wanted a second chance.

The first BRDM came by before we were loaded, but we were ready for the second one. It had soldiers hanging all over it (I think they were Afghan) and was traveling at about 40 kph. I gave the target a lead, aiming over fixed sights (the RPG's telescopic sight is a piece of garbage), and gently squeezed the trigger — nothing. The damn safety was on. Cursing, I quickly pushed the button to red, reaimed and fired.

The smoke and dust obscured everything. I turned to Ibrahim for another round, but he was sitting with his fingers in his ears and his eyes closed. I reloaded myself and strained to see the target through the dust. It was gone.

The 12.7s in the hotel opened up all around us. To get to the safety of the village, we had to run a gauntlet of open fields punctuated by relatively safe vineyards. The Soviets are lousy shots. Our entire party made it back unscathed.

I apologized for my poor marksmanship but the mujahideen quickly corrected me. The men in the vineyard had seen the whole thing and said that I scored a direct hit about the rear wheel. They saw a hat blown 20 feet into the air and three soldiers blown off the vehicle. I didn't get a second shot because it continued to roll after being hit. Informants who removed the bodies later told us that six men were killed.

On the way back we were harassed by a mujahideen who lived near the road. He was angry because the ambush would cause the enemy to bomb his village. I tried to explain to him, as I did to all the mujahideen, that they must either fight or surrender. If the fear of retribution keeps you from fighting, the enemy will win.

A Lucky Defector

I returned to Abdul Ahmad's committee when I heard that

he was planning an attack. A couple of militiamen wanted to defect and offered to help us capture their post by letting us in during their guard shift.

We arrived at 2200 hours. Our men didn't have guard until midnight, so we sat on the sidewalk and waited. I felt a little strange just sitting there in the open, but the communists stayed locked in their posts at night. The mujahideen in Herat control the night far more than the Viet Cong ever did in Vietnam.

At midnight, three of us crawled to the roof and the guard led us to three small rooms. Each room contained about four sleeping militiamen. I entered one of the rooms and woke each man in turn, warning him to be quiet. The last man refused to stand up, so I hit him a couple of times. I was just about to shoot him — if I buried the muzzle deep into his stomach, the sound would have been negligible — but a mujahideen came in and told me that the man was a defector to our side. Oops.

We loaded at least 20 Kalashnikovs, a 7.62mm machine gun, two boxes of grenades, a pair of Soviet walkie-talkies and a lot of ammunition into pushcarts that we found in the street. We had the prisoners haul all of this booty to our headquarters.

Back at the committee, everyone was ecstatic. We had captured more weapons than we knew what to do with and we didn't have to fire a shot — just the type of battle the mujahideen liked. I preferred a little more action, but it was better than sitting around.

Abdul Amad decided to visit his family who lived in a village about 40 kilometers from Herat. When he left, his committee lost all discipline. No operations were planned and weeks passed when we did nothing but sleep and loiter around our headquarters. I tried to teach the mujahideen basic tactics and hygiene — how to aim their rifles and bury their garbage — but their attention span and initiative were negligible.

A Running Board Raid

I returned to Ibrahim's committee in search of more combat. We received word that a militia commander was going to take a taxi to the airport around noon. So we decided to kidnap him. Our mujahideen was going to hide a Tokarev 9mm pistol in his vest, stop the taxi and bring the prisoner across 100 meters of open field to where the rest of us were hiding.

This was ridiculous. A militia commander was bound to have an armed bodyguard with him. Our boy would be heavily outgunned.

I asked Ibrahim to help me. We covered ourselves with dead brush within spitting distance of the road. When the man with the pistol stopped the taxi, we would jump out and help. Getting under my camouflage I couldn't help wondering how obvious two mounds of dead brush in the middle of a green field would be from the road.

The road was busy with BRDMs, BTRs and BMPs, all overflowing with Afghan and Soviet troops. When I realize that they didn't see us, I stuck my head out of the camouflage to get a good look at the passing equipment. It was like a game of hide-and-seek, only in this game the loser dies.

After an hour, I figured that the taxi wasn't going to show up. I sent the man with the pistol back to get the RPG-7 from



Tea and talk in a command tent near Herat. I'm on the far left.

the other mujahideen. We could at least ambush some of these vehicles. He returned empty-handed. The mujahideen had no stomach for a fight that day.

The next vehicle down the road was a large truck full of fuel drums, blankets and shoes. The mujahideen with the pistol jumped on the running board and force it onto a dirt road. I stood on the other running board and pointed my rifle at the driver. The mujahideen treated the two Afghans in the cab like friends, but I thought differently. The truck had been heading to the Soviet compound near the airport. It was obvious to me that the drivers were collaborators with the enemy.

Back at the committee, the mujahideen continued to treat the drivers like allies. Hell, they even gave them back some of their cargo. I tried to convince them to take the drivers prisoner, but they let them go. Two days later we found out they were long-time Communist Party members. You can't be too trusting in a civil war.

Heading Home

After the hijacking, the Herat mujahideen seemed to go on vacation. For a month it was the same story in every committee — brave talk but no action. Even though I'd been in Afghanistan nine months, I was willing to stay indefinitely if we were fighting, but I had no desire to waste away in inactivity. I decided to return to Pakistan.

I joined a group of mujahideen who were going to a village east of Herat. We forded the Hari Rud River and hired some karachis to bring us to a village near the airport. With our weapons in plain view and in broad daylight, we openly rode right under a huge grain elevator the Soviets used as an observation tower.

Someone had tried to blow up the pipeline leading to the airport so the communists increased security along the road we had to cross to get out of Herat. We decided to wait until things calmed down before crossing. We stayed in a house so close to the airport that we could hear the wheels of Soviet transports touch down. When I asked why they didn't mortar the airport, the mujahideen gave the familiar reply: They feared retaliatory bombing.

On the fifth night, we crossed the road, so close to an enemy parking complex that we were illuminated by its floodlights.

Close Encounter

The next day we were buzzed by three SU-7 jets as we crossed an open field. They flew barely 100 meters off the ground and I could clearly see the pilots looking at us. I was about to jump into a gully with the rest of the mujahideen when I noticed their commander just standing in the open looking at the jets. My pride forced me to do likewise. The jets, painted in green camouflage with a red star clearly visible on their tails, circled once and flew away. I guess we weren't worth wasting ordnance on.

Later we caught a bus that took us eastward along the Hari



Your author ready for war. Some mujahideen were gung-ho; others had anathemas to battle.

Rud Valley. Twenty fully armed mujahideen sitting in the open waiting for the bus must have been a strange sight — but then Afghanistan is a strange place.

After I said good-bye to the mujahideen, the remainder of my journey consisted of trying to convince each local chieftain to guide me to the next village. The Herat mujahideen gave me a letter of introduction that helped a great deal. Most of the time I was helped, but sometimes I found myself walking alone through the countryside trying to find the correct trail.

The Man From BBC

Farmers I met along the way always thought that I was a Soviet. They didn't understand "American" or "Reagan," so I told them I was from BBC. (They thought BBC was a *place*.) Since everyone listened to the BBC on the short wave, I was made an honored guest. After traveling for a month I finally arrived at a village supplied by truck. I paid a driver 1,000 Pakistani rupees (about \$62) to take me to the village of Musa Qal-eh. The mujahideen commander there tasked one of his men to bring me to the town of Sangin on the Hilmand River.

We doubled up on an Indian-manufactured motorcycle. I held on for dear life because it wasn't easy staying on the bike with a 50-pound rucksack, given the poor road conditions. When it got dark my guide refused to go any farther. He wanted to leave me in the middle of nowhere and return to Musa Qal-eh. I drew my knife and forced him to continue. His

commander ordered him to take me to Sangin and that's where we would go.

As soon as I was deposited at a Sangin tea shop, my guide disappeared. Sangin was a mujahideen town and I explained my situation to some local merchants. They directed me to two Pakistanis who made a business of moving refugees to Pakistan.

After days of waiting, innumerable false starts and 3,000 rupees, I was riding in a convoy of three jeep pickup trucks headed to Pakistan. Each truck contained more than 50 people. The women and children sat in the center atop their belongings and the men, including myself, sat with their feet over the side and tried to maintain their balance by clutching onto tie-down ropes.

We traveled only at night to avoid being spotted by helicopters out of Kandahar. Many people fell off in the more mountainous areas. The vehicles didn't stop, so you just had to run like hell to get back on. Remarkably, we didn't lose anyone.

We passed into Pakistan in about four days. We didn't even see a Pak checkpoint. I jumped into the first bus that I saw. I wanted to avoid contact with Pak authorities and I knew that refugees would draw their attention.

I entered Quetta traveling like just another European hippie headed for India — a strange end to a remarkable adventure. ✕



BREAKING WITH CONVENTION

SOF 3-Gun
Benefit Match

BY COL. MIKE PECK (RET.)

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL NISCHALKE, EDITOR,
THE NRA'S SHOOTING SPORTS USA MAGAZINE

The majority of the people who read *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine like to gamble — not necessarily with money, but with fate, with life, or other such valued commodities. Most of them also have an interest in guns, either as current or former military or law enforcement personnel, hunters, or just plain enthusiasts. Because of this phenomenon, the Soldier Of Fortune Convention was always held in Las Vegas and featured a blend of gun-related activities, as well as the opportunity to tease Lady Luck at the myriad casinos that proliferate in that fair metropolis. During the 17 years of the SOF Conventions in Las Vegas, the format remained pretty much the same; however, during this time a subtle change was occurring to Las Vegas itself, and the various attractions there became increasingly varied and alluring, so that the glitz and glamour tended to gain the upper hand and began to compete directly with the SOF show.

Because of this phenomenon, the marketing staff decided to analyze the core tastes and proclivities of the readership, and it was determined, not surprisingly, that of the two traits, gambling and guns, it was actually the latter which predominated. Because of this, it was decided to amend the venue and emphasize the gun-related activities in an environment that would not conflict with the SOF agenda. In searching out a new location for this revised program, Robert K. Brown, as a long-time member of the National Rifle Association Board of Directors, hit upon the idea of moving from the bright lights of Las Vegas to the “Wild West” ambience of Raton, New Mexico, home of the NRA's Whittington Center. The result was the SOF/Whittington Center World Championship 3-Gun Tactical Response Benefit Match, Shoot-Fest, and Gun Show — with all

profits and proceeds going to the Center.

For those who have not had the pleasure of visiting the NRA range complex, it is an incredible facility, located off of Interstate 25 on Highway 64, just south of New Mexico's border with Colorado. Its name derives from former NRA President George R. Whittington, the individual who was most influential in establishing and developing the site; he remained active in fundraising for the installation until his death in 1983.

The Center sits on 33,335 acres, making the ranges sufficiently isolated that the chances of a shopping mall popping up anywhere near them is nil. Additionally, with so much space, as well as the natural barriers imposed by the mountainous terrain, the probability of a stray bullet or ricochet damaging anything on adjacent property is also nonexistent. Featuring 15 different range areas, almost any type of shooter can be accommodated, with dedicated space allotted to black powder; bench rest; high-power rifle; small-bore rifle; silhouette; pistol; and shotgun, to mention only the most popular.

In addition, the ranges can be reconfigured to almost any pattern, such as SOF's 3-gun competition, and are regularly used to host an impressive array of national and international events. A number of other outdoor or shooting activities are also held on a year-round basis, including hunting trips; seminars; and clinics, not just for NRA members, but for anyone who wants to participate.

The Center is directed by Mike Ballew, whose dedication to detail and pursuit of excellence have won him the respect and accolades of all who know him. He is assisted by Robbie

Roberts, the Program Director, who is an efficient and no-nonsense administrator. Because of the outstanding qualities of the Whittington Center and its staff, it is truly a shooter's paradise.

The revised SOF program was held from 5 to 9 September 2001, with *la pièce de résistance* being a series of 3-Gun Tactical Response Matches similar to those formerly held in Las Vegas.

The Tactical Response Matches were orchestrated by Kurt and Eric Miller, well-known to all those who had participated in the Las Vegas shoots. As always, the Miller Brothers put together a series of shooting scenarios that were multi-faceted, quite clever, and extremely demanding. Their courses were all based on real-world gun-battles and tactical situations: For example, the "Kettle Hill" problem entailed assaulting a bunker on top of a high berm with a rifle and shotgun, only to discover that there was a second hill and a second bunker that had to be neutralized. Once that difficulty was dealt with, the participants had to engage a series of targets at ranges between 80 and 175 yards beyond the bunkers with rifle fire — much like what occurred in 1898.

Another favorite was the "Siege of Fire Base Gloria," based on a Vietnam scenario, in which all three weapons were employed. The action began with a shotgun from inside a hooch; the shooter had to exit and knock-down an array of metal plates, as well as blast a series of simulated Claymore mines with buckshot. Subsequent to this, he had to unslung his rifle and engage a number of silhouettes on another side of the "perimeter," then draw his pistol and hammer some close-in targets appearing from yet another direction — just like a real fire base defense.

Some problems, such as "LRRP Caught in the Open," required use of the rifle exclusively, while others, like "Tunnel Rat," were pistol-only. The latter was particularly difficult, requiring the contenders to toss a simulated grenade into a circle containing three targets; if they missed with the grenade, they had to take them out with a handgun. The shooters then entered a 15-yard-long tunnel made of 3-foot culvert to engage 10 targets from three dif-

ferent firing ports. Everyone agreed that it was an interesting and challenging workout.

The most prolific rifle used was the AR15 and its look-alikes, in a variety of configurations, although there were a few M1As; a couple of FALs; and one AR10. Shotguns were mostly Benelli M1 Super 90s, with a smattering of Remington 1100s. Only two competitors used pumps. As for pistols, a few big-bullet fans packed M1911-style single-stack .45s, with two firers using H&K P-7 squeeze-cockers in 9 Mike. The majority of the shooters, however, used .40 caliber weapons with high-capacity magazines — mostly Glocks and Strayer Tripp Wide-Body models.

One reason the Millers put on such a great match is that they, themselves, are competitive shooters. After finishing up at the Center, they both went to Las Vegas to the World Championship Three-Gun Matches, where Kurt came in 8th and Eric placed 11th.

More Enjoyable Than Vegas

The Holiday Classic in Raton was not quite as exotic and alluring as the Las Vegas Palace Station, the site of the 2000 Convention, but it was more manageable, more close-knit, and more enjoyable, since everyone was packed-in together. In addition to the usual camaraderie and carousing that characterizes an SOF bash, Bob Brown raffled off a variety of swag, ranging from an SMG magazine pouch (which I won) to a .45 caliber Safari Arms Enforcer *cum* Safariland holster (which I did not win).

The first raffle was held on Friday night, during which knives, flashlights, holsters, pouches, belt buckles, tee shirts, hats, and other assorted loot was given away by RKB, who was acting as master of ceremonies (and telling bad jokes). The first night was simply a teaser for the following evening, when, after drawing for a series of useful but lesser prizes, the holder of the winning number walked off with the highly modified Olympic Arms .45. I had been safeguarding this weapon for Bob prior to its being raffled off, and lusted for it in my heart. Unfortunately, however,

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(opposite) After fighting his way up the hill with his pistol, JP Enterprises' own John P. Gangle commences fire with his signature JP Grade 1 race rifle. (above) SOF's Robert K. Brown traverses the Cooper Walk at the NRA Whittington Center. (right) The 2001 SOF 3-Gun champ, Eddie Rhodes, unloads his .40 SVI on "enemy sappers" at the Siege of Fire Base Gloria stage.



tion in the U.K. or extradition to Spain as the U.K. had become party to the torture convention after his alleged torture actions, and pursuant to the principle of no *ex post facto* implementation, Pinochet was sent back to Chile.

"In light of this precedent," Michael Scharf, of the New England School of Law points out, "the U.S. position that international law prohibits the ICC from exercising jurisdiction over the nationals of not-state parties is not just unfounded, it also has the potential of negatively effecting existing U.S. law enforcement authority with respect to terrorists and war criminals."

True. However, in previous treaties with dire implications such as the Genocide Convention, the United States made a reservation that required its consent before any dispute involving the United States can be submitted to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), in essence negating universal jurisdiction. I observed during the ICJ proceedings in The Hague how invoking this reservation let the United States walk away from the jurisdiction of the court in 2000, in *Federal Republic of Yugoslavia vs. the US*, while the NATO allies that were also named remained subject to the jurisdiction of the court. The treaty for the ICC allows no reservations and the consent of the nationality of the one accused is not necessary before an indictment can be brought in the ICC. The efforts of the United States to limit jurisdiction were significant, yet the assembly's rejection of reservations and consent of the national state left enormous gaps.

One more protection was incorporated in the ICC that is referred to as complementarity, or putting the ICC in the position of last resort. The territorial state and the national state of the suspect have primary jurisdiction over a crime. The Prosecutor would have to notify the United States of the intention to initiate an investigation. If the United States notifies the prosecutor within a month that it is conducting its own investigation, the Prosecutor must stall the investigation unless a pre-Trial Chamber can be convinced that the investigation is a sham. The prosecutor however "may limit the scope of the information provided to States" where the Prosecutor believes it necessary to "protect persons, prevent destruction of evidence or prevent the absconding of

persons." The Prosecutor shall review the States investigation and prosecution six months after the State takes the case over "or at any time when there has been a significant change of circumstances based on the State's unwillingness or inability genuinely to carry out the investigation." During the period of time that the State has jurisdiction of the case, the Prosecutor may request that the State concerned periodically inform the Prosecutor of the progress of its investigations, and any subsequent prosecutions.

Who Judged The Judges?

Concerns have been voiced as to what the composition of the judges in the Pre-Trial Chamber might be, who will determine when and whether a state is "unwilling" or "unable" to prosecute, or whether the ICC will invalidate national trials by deciding that the trial is ineffective, a sham or a smoke screen.

The decision of the Pre-Trial Chamber is subject to appeal and the power to make a final determination as to whether a good faith effort at prosecution was made would be up to the ICC judges. In essence, a foreign court will be exercising judicial oversight over the United States.

The bottom line is that in any peacekeeping mission, the peace keepers are subject to the jurisdiction of the ICC if the state in which peacekeeping is being conducted is a party to the ICC. A prosecutor or a state can file a complaint based upon information provided to the prosecutor from multiple sources. If a three-judge tribunal decides that the investigation is to go forward, the prosecutor has the mandate to investigate possible war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and possibly aggression, provided the Security Council has not voted to put the investigation on hold. The United States could initiate Courts Martial proceedings in order to pre-empt ICC proceedings, but if the judges of the ICC determine that the proceedings are inadequate, the court could go forward.

The potential for prosecutions motivated not by a quest for justice, but as an instrument of national policy by a country or even a radical NGO with an axe to grind, thus is very real. Should American peacekeepers, already sailing in harm's way in fulfillment of their duty, be subjected to such additional danger?

Dr. Martin Brass, Ph.D., is an international lawyer, and a frequent contributor to SOF. ✕

Sudanese African tribespeople where more than two million have been killed in the ongoing hostilities.

It named the NFD people involved in the contract as its operations manager Duncan Rykaart (an ex-colonel in the SADF's 5 Recce Commando), Frederick Christoffel Grove (ex-deputy commander of SA's Parachute Battalion) and another former SADF special forces operative, "Brigadier" Nick van Den Bergh.

Both Rykaart and van den Bergh were operational in Angola when this correspondent went in with Executive Outcomes in 1995. In fact, it goes further. Rykaart was my escort officer when I visited the old Cuban air force base at Cabo Ledo and Saurimo, capital of the Angolan diamond fields in the northeast of the country. Together with Hennie Blaauw — prior to going to the front — we all spent time together in Luanda and stayed in van den Bergh's villa in the Angolan capital.

What has become clear is that as a company, NFD is no fly-by-night merc operation. It has a substantial number of former EO personnel in its employ. Sources have confirmed that the company even bought the expansive property at 13 Gouws Street, in Raslouw, on the outskirts of Pretoria, the same headquarters complex that originally belonged to Executive Outcomes.

Since the news of NFD operations has emerged, Rykaart has denied any knowledge of either the Libyan or Sudanese contracts, even though he has been fingered as having taken the lead role in negotiations with Khartoum.

"Someone has been masquerading, misusing our company name to get work," Rykaart told *Africa Confidential*. He stressed that that had happened a lot in the old EO days. And while he insists that his company has no foreign security contracts, the NFD website boasts a client base in Egypt, the Congo (Brazza), Uganda, Sierra Leone, Angola and Bulgaria.

One source indicated that many of the weapons that the company acquired in recent years originated in Bulgaria. It'll be interesting to hear what the European Union has to say about that.

Al Venter is a frequent contributor to SOF. ✕

We Were Soldiers Once

Continued from page 47

playing Bob Ouellette, Moore's radio operator. He fluffed and stammered a couple of times, but he had all the tension in his voice. Only, of course, it wasn't happening. There were no jets in the sky. There was no gunfire. There were no explosions.

"Jim Morris, meet Mel Gibson and Randall Wallace."

"Yeah," I said, "We met briefly before, when I bothered the two busiest guys on the set."

We talked for a few minutes about the atmosphere here. Everyone from the stars to the lowest grip is flat-out in awe of what the Cav troopers did at Ia Drang. And there is an unspoken subtext. "You guys have taken a bad rap, and we're going to try to make it up to you." Every Vietnam Vet who visited the set, and there were many, was treated with great respect.

If this isn't a good movie, it won't be for lack of trying.

We talked for quite a while. At one point I mentioned that I had been in the hospital with a bunch of Marine lieutenants, one of whom had survived being overrun by playing dead all night under the bodies of his platoon. "My problem with Marine officers is that they seem more proud of the friendly casualties they suffer than they are of the enemy casualties they cause. I think that's a lousy attitude for an officer to have."

"My dad was on Guadalcanal with the Army," said Mel Gibson. "He's still pissed at Marine PR. He said every time the Army did something the Marines got the credit for it."

I didn't bother telling him that the Corps has powerful enemies in both the Navy and the Army. Without that PR they would have gone out with sailing ships.

"Yeah," I said, "The reason for that big gold U.S. ARMY over your pocket is because a bunch of Army guys were identified as Marines in a Pathé newsreel from Korea. For 10 years we wore a big gold target over our hearts because some general didn't like that."

Gibson, in my view, has heroic presence, and command presence, if they're not the same thing. His company is making this movie, and everybody on the set is dependent on him. It takes about 400 people to make a film like this. It really is a command problem. Nobody is going to die, at



least probably not, but a battalion of people is dependent on Mel Gibson to feed their families.

Yet if Gibson didn't look heroic he'd still have a brilliant future as a comedian. He's a natural clown with a quick wit and a wry smile. "I think it was Aristotle," he said, "who said, 'Life is like a shit sandwich. The more bread you got, the less shit you have to eat.'"

"Clever, those Greeks," said Wallace.

So there you have it, friends. Our entire culture explained by our most popular film star, in one pithy epithet.

A little later I was mooching around the set, talking to anyone standing around looking bored, a surprising number of people.

Joe introduced me to Barry Pepper, the young actor playing him at 23. Barry had a handle on the emotional parts of his performance, but, child of the digital age, he didn't know how to load a 35mm mechanical camera. He was going to have to do it on camera, under fire. The real Joe drilled the movie Joe on this fairly complicated procedure like it was a rifle and he was going to have to field-strip it blindfolded.

A truly stunning young blonde woman came over and Joe introduced her as his wife, Karen. In pants and a casual top she had an aristocratic tailored look that one sometimes finds among the old families of the Eastern Seaboard.

At that point the Assistant Director,

who is pretty much the first sergeant of a movie shoot, had the Production Assistants, who are pretty much corporals and buck sergeants only much more polite, ask all the visitors to move around behind the video booth. They were going to shoot a scene in which close air support busts up an attack by some black pajama-clad VC who had been brought in to help the NVA. No actual aircraft were involved. They would be added digitally later, but the fields were mined with explosives, and they were all around the set.

First, everyone was gathered for a thorough safety briefing. The set was to be closed; all non-essential personnel were to leave, and once the shooting started there was no getting on or off the set. We were politely herded behind the video booth. I found myself standing next to Karen Galloway. "So, how do you know Joe?" she asked. "Were you in this battle?"

"Huh-uh," I said. "I'm just a big fan of the book. How'd you meet Joe?"

She hesitated a beat, and sucked in a little breath. "My father was in this battle, she said. "He was Hal Moore's S-2."

That brought me up short. If I remembered correctly Hal Moore's S-2, Tom Metsker, had been killed in the Ia Drang. I wondered if it had been on the day we were shooting.

"He was killed," she said. "I was eighteen months old. Before he wrote the book Joe wrote an article about the battle. My mom saw it and wrote him.

He came to see us. They have a ceremony at the wall every Veterans Day for the Ia Drang veterans, and Joe invited us to that, and to the reunion."

Later, I was speaking to Joe, and told him what she had said. "I took the last picture of that man alive," he replied.

Red Elvises

"AWRIGHT! Quiet on the set! Action!" *BLAM! Rat-a-tat, BLAM! BLAM, rat-a-tat!* The war movie sound track rose to a crescendo. In front of us an M60 crew and a couple of riflemen were firing at some Asian extras in black p.j.s and conical hats. I bought the p.j.s, but I was more dubious about the hats. I'd never seen any in the Highlands. They had good dispersion though, and advanced by leaps and bounds. Occasionally one would go down, some more spectacularly than others. It was a good scene. It looked like a battle, although the first I'd ever seen looking past a blonde Production Assistant in a black T-shirt with the words "RED ELVISES" across the front in crimson.

"Cut!" *Rat-a-tat! BLAM!* "Cease fire!" Finally it did.

Karen Galloway reached down to pick up some blank .223 brass.

"You gonna reload that?" I asked.

"I might," she grinned. "That's what they do on our range."

"Whoever Heard Of The Ia Drang Back Then?"

The only major mover and shaker I hadn't spoken to was General Moore. It took a few tries, but finally I caught him at his home in Alabama.

It was a pleasant conversation. Hal Moore is not the kind of general who expects everybody he meets to pass in review. The conversation was fairly wide-ranging, not confined to just the battle and the movie.

He told me his version of how the film came to be, starting with "Randy" Wallace picking up the book at LAX and taking Joe's denunciation of Hollywood Vietnam movies as a challenge. "Randy spent six years putting this project together. Once the army determined he was serious they let him go through two weeks of Ranger School. He ran patrols from all three camps. Not an easy thing for a fifty-year-old to do."

He went on to describe Mel Gibson and Wallace coming to dinner at his home in Alabama, and praying with Gibson in his private chapel. One gets the feeling that there's a lot of mutual respect there. They are both

staunch Catholics, and both have a whole bunch of kids.

At one point during the conversation I mentioned that I had become somewhat close with Danny Glover, Gibson's co-star in the *Lethal Weapon* movies, during the filming of *Operation Dumbo Drop*, and what a fine man I thought Danny was.

"Y'know," said General Moore, "Danny has a line in the first *Lethal Weapon*. Julie, do you remember that line?"

He put Mrs. Moore on. "There's a scene in *Lethal Weapon* where Danny lets this crooked bum go. Mel's character says 'What did you do that for?' And Danny replies, 'He saved my butt in the Ia Drang.' Whoever heard of the Ia Drang back then?"

"I reminded Mel of that when he came to dinner at our house. I said, 'How's that for an omen?'"

Major Jim Morris (Ret.) has authored the books War Story, The Devil's Secret Name, Fighting Men, and his newest, Above and Beyond, available from Dennis Cummings; dennis@realwarstories.com. Jim resides in Los Angeles and is also involved in motion picture screenwriting and production.

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Originality is an extraordinary commodity in this day & age and the herd frequently shuns the road less traveled. The time for these new ideas has come. We cordially invite you to be a part of this exciting new match format. We look forward to seeing you in July.

We're pleased to announce that **The Gunsmoke Gunslingers Invitational Match** is the only shooting event that will be endorsed by *Soldier of Fortune Magazine* in 2002.

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Second Front Of Terror

Continued from page 51

load together) — is to establish a counter-terrorist training camp for Philippine troops near Zamboanga on the southern island of Mindanao, across the narrow straits from ASG strongholds. War games launched from Zamboanga are scheduled about the time this issue hits the streets: “These will be the first war games with live targets,” said Philippine presidential spokesman Rigoberto Tiglao. The base at Zamboanga is well-situated for strikes on rebel strongholds in Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi — or elsewhere in the some 7,000 islands of Southern Philippines. According to Philippine sources, the United States wanted to send some 1,000 troops, but the Philippine government, sensitive to an internal backlash [the obligatory leftist pickets at the presidential palace, and Allah Akbar U.S. flag burnings are already underway] and constitutional restraints, had agreed to accept only 650 troops consisting of support troops and some 160 Army Special Forces troops to do what they do best: Train the indig. There will be considerable materiel assistance, as

well. In addition to training, U.S. troops are expected to accompany their Filipino students on patrol in ASG territory and will be armed and prepared to defend themselves — hands-on instruction at its best.

Noted one U.S. official, “this is a large group of people and a considerable amount of equipment.” C-130 transports have been landing from Okinawa and offloading construction equipment and supplies. Philippine armed forces chief General Diomedio Villanueva told reporters, “they will be here to train, but not go to the front lines.” U.S. military sources told CNN that guidance outlining the mission “allows” for “armed U.S. observers” to accompany Philippine forces to battle areas, if requested. If not requested, expect some interloping. The rules of engagement for U.S. troops allow self-defense only.

BALIKATAN is the first joint U.S.-Philippine effort specifically targeting ASG, which Philippine officials have long identified as being supported by al-Qaeda, and the first direct U.S. action against Islamic Philippine rebels since Gen. Jacob Smith commanded the roughshod anti-Moro campaign there between the Spanish-American War and World War I. Although all U.S.

forces pulled out a decade ago, both countries are still bound by a 1951 mutual defense pact. Contemporary with, but unrelated to BALIKATAN, is Operation BALANCED PISTON, a month-long joint-command exercise involving some 40 U.S. Army, Navy, Marine and Air Force personnel in the northern Philippines.

Noted Philippine columnist Federico D. Pascual Jr. of the *Manila Mail*, “there is only one way out for the Arroyo administration groping in the Basilan maze: Get the top Abu Sayyaf commanders, dead or alive. Even if government forces recover all the hostages, as long as the terrorist chieftains are free to lead their pack in kidnapping innocent civilians, decapitating hostages at will and sowing terror, the problem festers. While recovering the hostages is important, as a detached observer, we think the joint military-police-civilian forces should give priority to capturing the Abu Sayyaf leaders dead or alive.”

With a commonality of interests, America agrees. Now, U.S. forces are here to help.

Frank Hopkins is a frequent contributor to SOF. ✕



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Update On Torture

Continued from page 15

bin Laden's al Qaeda network. Alternative strategies and options being weighed include "truth" drugs, sensory deprivation and extraditing the suspects to countries whose intelligence services are more used to employing torture and making threats against suspect's family members. Investigators, the Times reports, suggested that the time might soon come when a truth serum such as sodium pentothal, would be deemed an acceptable tool for interrogators. Investigators have been disappointed that the usual incentives to break suspects, such as providing carrots including promises of shorter sentences, jobs and new lives have failed to break the silence.

"It could get to the spot where we could go to pressure ... where we don't have a choice, and we are probably getting there," an FBI agent told the Times.

The definition of torture includes the administration or application of mind altering substances.

Andrew Higgins reports in the Wall Street Journal article, "Cloak and Dagger, A CIA Backed Team Used Brutal Means To Crack Terror Cell" how the CIA used extreme means to crack an Albanian terrorist cell. In 1998, the CIA asked Albania to help roundup a half-dozen extremists operating locally and the CIA recruited Egypt to help with the project. U.S. authorities considered the Tirana cell one of the most dangerous in Europe. Five members of the cell told of being blindfolded, and electrical shocks applied to their nipples and genitals. Several suffered broken ribs and fractured cheekbones. Egyptian interrogators reportedly hung one suspect from his wrists and applied electricity to his feet and back. One spoke of being suspended by his limbs, dragged on his face and made to stand for hours in a cell with filthy water up to his knees.

The C.I.A. is not the only United States agency that is accused of engaging in torture. Reports that torture is practiced in the United States date back for decades. Counterpunch reports that police in Chicago in the mid-70s through early 80s used electroshock, oxygen deprivation, the bastinado and beatings of the testicles on suspects.

In 2000, the UN delivered a severe public rebuke to the U.S. for its record on preventing torture and degrading punishment. The UN Committee Against Torture, has called for the abo-

lition of electric shock stun belts [1000 in use in the U.S.] and restraining chairs on prisoners, as well as an end to holding minors in adult jails. The organization has reported that sexual assault by police and prison officers is rampant. In the U.S. prison system, classified as rape factories, there are estimates that twice as many men as women are raped each year. The organization has derided the excessively harsh regime in maximum security prisons, the use of chain gangs in which prisoners perform manual labor while shackled together, and the number of cases of police brutality against racial minorities.

Then there is Israel. Steve Chapman reports that thousands of Palestinians are subject to "moderate physical pressure" to persuade them to talk, including shaking them, covering their heads with foul smelling hoods, putting them in cold showers, depriving them of sleep for days on end, and forcing them to crouch in awkward positions. An estimated 10 detainees died from their mistreatment. Steve Weizman, a reporter for the Associated Press reports that Palestinian detainees are regularly tortured despite a 1999 Israeli Supreme Court ban. Prisoners are immersed in freezing water, made to carry a heavy wooden beam while manacled and then beaten.

"Torture and other forms of ill treatment are still widely used against Palestinian detainees both in General Security Service interrogation facilities and by members of the Israeli army and police" a document by the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel said.

The use of Torture has been outlawed both by the United States as well as by Israel.

The United States is party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which forbids cruel and unusual treatment. That prohibition is written in the United States Constitution and the US Supreme Court has ruled against unconstitutional inquisitions.

The U.S. ratified the International Convention against Torture in 1994. Under all of these laws, both domestic as well as international, there is no derogation allowed for the use of torture, whether during a state of war or any other public emergency. Under US law, evidence extracted using physical pressure or torture is inadmissible in court and interrogators could face criminal charges.

Most of the countries in the world are parties to the Convention on Torture. Over 120 countries are said to engage in torture. ✖

SOF 3-Gun Match

Continued from page 75

the Gods of War remained insouciant and indifferent to my fervent entreaties and supplications, so I contented myself with the mag pouch, and another beer.

Prizes Galore

Sunday marked the last day of the gun show, and the final matches were held during the morning. That afternoon a gala luncheon was held at Skinner's, located in the Shotgun/ Dining Facility, where \$45,000 worth of donated awards were given out as prizes for the 3-gun competition (see inset). The top gun was Eddie Rhodes, with an overall score of 718.29, although it seemed like almost everyone won something. There were 80 competitors, some of whom came from as far away as Budapest, with Hungary being ably represented by Oliver Rozsa, who is in the international security business.

Colonel Mike Peck (Ret.), a highly decorated Vietnam veteran and frequent SOF contributor, was previously director of DIA's POW/MIA office in Washington, D.C. Presently, he is an international security consultant.

Soldier of Fortune will not be holding a 3-Gun Match this year. After much soul-searching and agonizing, we have reluctantly decided that SOF cannot hold the match and continue to focus the necessary amount of time to effectively and thoroughly cover World War III.

SOF wishes to thank the hundreds of individuals, as well as our scores of sponsors who have participated in and supported the SOF 3-Gun Match since its inception in 1980. Mike Horne and his dedicated staff have done a superlative job since 1983, as have the Miller brothers, who ran the match at the Whittington Center in 2001. Mike Horne will be sponsoring a 3-gun match in Las Vegas from 24 to 28 September 2002. He can be contacted for further information at 661-588-1063 (home) or 661-758-6447 (work). Rich Wyatt, of Gunsmoke, will be holding a 3-Gun Match at the Whittington Center over the 4th of July holiday weekend. For further information call: 303-456-4545.

God Bless America!

*Robert K. Brown
Editor/Publisher
Soldier Of Fortune Magazine ✖*

Real Operators

Continued from page 55

would be the case in a real scenario, all training was done in absolute darkness. Anxious to demonstrate his SureFire Tactical Lights to the Navy, John Matthews went to the facility and did just that. When he asked Dan Good how he liked them, Dan replied, "Great quality, but not enough light." Shocked, Matthews asked how much light they needed, and Good asked, "Do you have one that will shine in someone's eyes



Mounted within the new recoil spring guide, the LaserMax emits its pulsating beam directly beneath the bore for continuous tight shot placement. This LaserMax is fully adjustable.

and come out his ears?" Dan went on to explain that he wanted a lightweight hand-held light that would instantly, but temporarily, blind an enemy in order to prevent him from fighting effectively, or fighting at all. The family of SureFire Millennium Tactical Fighting Lights was born.

With an output of from 125 to 500 lumens, SureFire's Millennium Lights are both hand-held and weapon mounted, with several of the latter dedicated to particular weapons including pistols and long guns. With enough light to temporarily blind an opponent, even on a sunny day, Millennium lights with 125 lumens are generally preferred for indoor use, while lamps up to 500 lumens are better for perimeter control and other exterior use.

The SureFire Institute

So impressed was John Matthews with Dan Good that he hired him shortly after Dan retired from the Navy to run the SureFire Institute. A facility that offers training only to military and law enforcement personnel, the Institute travels off-site, and has trained operatives around the world to

fight with light. As Dan Good proclaims, "If you win the light fight, you'll win the gunfight."

Having been a police officer for nearly three decades, I have been there, seen it and done it, but when I went to the SureFire Institute I amazed at how many tricks an old dog can learn. As a SWAT cop, I'd used SureFire Tactical Lights for years, and had used some of its new Millennium lights since retiring. However, I never used them as I learned to use them in the SureFire Institute. In addition to extensive day and night live-fire, the Institute teaches transition shooting from either hand, a new technique for shooting on the move, and reinforces what it teaches with hours of paintball room clearing. I'm healing nicely.

After having taught police tactics for many years, I also cannot say enough about the refined, simple weapon retention and takeaway techniques I learned at SureFire Institute. While I'd like to say more about them here, I'll refrain for obvious reasons. However, if you're a law enforcement tactical or training officer, you need to look into the SureFire Institute.

With the Operator, Springfield Armory is now at the head of the pack in tactical 1911 pistols. If you're looking for a tactical 1911 pistol like no other, check out Springfield's new Mil-Spec Operator 1911-A1 pistol. For information, contact Springfield Armory, Dept. SOF, 420 W. Main St., Geneseo, IL 61254; (800) 680-6866; or visit www.springfieldarmory.com. ✖

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Sound Off

BY COL. DAVID H. HACKWORTH (RET.)

Kill the Globo Cop Biz Before It Kills the USA

Once more, for thousands of our defenders, the holidays and new year resounded with tramping boots in foreign lands rather than yuletide caroling at home.

Once again our warriors are deployed around the globe, fighting in dangerous places and continuing to defend other people's turf for reasons that don't always compute.

Since I was a kid, the sound of American boots marching off to war has come to seem as inevitable to the young men of this nation — and now, unfortunately, to the young women, as well — as spring rain.

First there was World War II, a just war against totalitarian monsters in which — as with today's terrorist crazies — we had to either whip 'em or wind up suffering the terrible consequences.

But once the Axis was put down in 1945, America became the self-appointed guardian of Western Civilization, and Johnny didn't come marching home. Like the Romans and Brits before us, we began setting up outposts around the world without any mind of the burden or the cost.

This long occupation has been intermittently interrupted by the occasional hot war, as with Korea — another just conflict that certainly was in our national interests — or Vietnam — where we had no reason for going except the greed of the war profiteers.

More tramp, tramp, tramping of American boots was heard after Vietnam; first in Lebanon, then Grenada and Panama, followed by Kuwait and Iraq, Somalia and Haiti and Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia. Few of these operations had anything to do with our national security, but all have been big winners when it comes to the bottom lines of the companies and individuals that make up the military-industrial-congressional complex. Special kudos should go here to the hard-lobbying oil cartel, which continues to make sure our way of life includes bigger and better gas-guzzling SUVs. Defending those far-flung oil fields keeps ratcheting up the goodies — troops, toys and dollars — in the game.

Not only have the past six decades of hot- and cold-war bucks been finger-lickin' good for the game's insiders who slip back and forth between government and business, they have also motivated a lot of fanatics around the world to



hate all things American. And now many of these scary types are willing to kamikaze planes into buildings on Main Street USA or drive explosive-laden trucks into our facilities in other countries where we probably shouldn't be.

We maintain about 100,000 military personnel in both Europe and Asia — where many of the locals want us gone yesterday — at a cost of billions of dollars per year. The locals rightly say that we've overstayed our mission, which ended when another empire, the Soviet Union, bellied-up and followed the path of the Romans and the Brits into history's dustbin. So it doesn't make a lick of

military sense. Not only are these people more than capable of defending themselves against now mainly nonexistent threats, the average Hans and Kim are chanting, "Yankee go home."

Look at Europe, which we've defended with our blood and dollars since before we got stuck into both World Wars. After madmen clobbered the USA on Sept. 11, our so-called friends there couldn't wait to criticize us for punching-out the perps, and now they're offering little help in this critical fight. If the Twin Towers had been the Eiffel Tower and we didn't rush to the rescue, the French would be demanding we return the Statue of Liberty!

Sure we need a strong military ready to defend America, but we need one that — as opposed to the Roman, Brit and Soviet models — follows the wise guidance of our Founding Fathers when they said that we shouldn't do a *Pax Americana* and stick our nose in other folks' dealings.

We must examine each overseas commitment and ask: Does this mission have the moral right? Is it in our national interest? And is it a militarily imperative or just a good deal to make the MICC's cash register ring?

The arms biz is where, sadly, we lead the world by a factor of four in ventures that more than often have little to do with peace or good will.

<http://www.hackworth.com> is the address of David Hackworth's home page.

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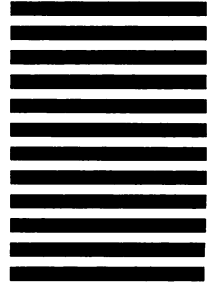
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